

Our Relation To The Absolute
A STUDY IN
TRUE PSYCHOLOGY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR
MEMOIRS OF RAMAKRISHNA
LIFE BEYOND DEATH
REINCARNATION
INDIA AND HER PEOPLE
SPIRITUAL UNFOLDMENT
PATH OF REALIZATION
IDEAL OF EDUCATION
DIVINE HERITAGE OF MAN
GREAT SAVIOURS OF THE WORLD
HUMAN AFFECTION AND DIVINE LOVE
SAYINGS OF RAMAKRISHNA,
ETC.





SWAMI ABHEDANANDA
Drawn by Frank Dvorak of Prague

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OUR RELATION TO THE ABSOLUTE

*A STUDY IN
TRUE PSYCHOLOGY*

by
SWAMI ABHEDANANDA



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PREFACE

Our Relation to The Absolute is an offer of ours to the reading public as the second contribution to the *Abhedânanda Memorial Series*. This volume contains nine lectures with an appended chapter *Questions and Answers* systematically delivered by Swâmi Abhedânanda in course of his discourses on *True Psychology* in America in 1920. In these learned lectures the Swâmi deals with the critical problems of psychology, science and philosophy, and he keeps always his eyes wide open for making them quite compatible with logic and modern science. The Swâmi marches all through his lectures with a rational mind to prove that there is an existence of a *psyche* or the soul in psychology, and that *psyche* is nothing but the divine consciousness, and it is in essence the supra-spatial, supra-temporal and supra-casual transcendental Absolute. His views are that the Western psychology is a *psyche*-less psychology whose treatment of the science of soul is quite imperfect. Because the Western psychology teaches psychology "not in the sense of the science of the *psychè* or soul but in the sense of the physiological origin and ordering of the mind. * * But we refer to the truths and systematization and classification of those truths appertaining to the soul or the *psyche*—that is True psychology" (pp. 2, 5).

In *Ideal of Education* again the Swâmi says: "In the West there is psychology without a *psyche*, which means the soul. There is the study of psychology but the existence of a *psyche* is not admitted; but Hindu psychology is far better (p. 34). But what is this Hindu psychology? The Hindu psychology, he says in his

India & Her People, is "the Yoga system of Patanjali," and this is the True psychology. In this volume the Swâmi deals skilfully with the Yoga system of Patanjali comparing it with the system of Western psychology, logic and scientific reasonings. He says: "There is no system of psychological psychology in the world so complete as the psychology of Patanjali. The modern psychology of Europe, strictly speaking, is not true psychology, because it does not admit the existence of *psyche*, the soul; as Schopenhauer says: *The study of psychology is vain, for there is no psyche*" (p. 29).

Really, the Western psychology with all its branches tries to unveil the mystery of the soul, but, as a matter of fact, it has not succeeded in this attempt at all. It may be said that it proceeds from the centre to the circumference and there moves around but does not know how to recede back to the centre again. It seems to be misled in the dark wilderness of duality and cannot find out the path of unity and absolute harmony. The cause of this failure, the Swâmi says, is "simply because the soul is beyond the reach of the senses." But True psychology, on the other hand, knows how to go beyond the senses and discloses this secret of transcending the world of sufferings and to reach the supra-mundane realm of peace and ever-lasting tranquility to the seekers after Truth.

The Swâmi says: "True psychology recognizes the existence of body, mind and soul. * * But the modern physiological psychology admits the existence of body only, and nothing else. True psychology tells us that what we call the physical body is the dwelling house of the soul. It is manufactured by the soul which is the source of intelligence and self-consciousness" (p. 6). Really body and mind are the images of the soul as they borrow their lustre and existence from the soul; and the modifications of the mind are the change and diver-

sity, and so they are unreal. The soul is the only essence, the supreme essence, from which all individuals derive their existence. It is the All and the Whole. It suffers no change; it has no increase or decrease, no beginning or end, no outside or inside, no evolution or involution. It is the quintessence of the spiritual *Sâdhanâ*, which is one and the same as the ultimate apprehension of the Absolute.

The Swâmi's observation and arguments throughout the treatment on the subject is purely critical and analytical. He vehemently refutes the materialistic theories of the soul, such as the production theory, combination theory, automatism theory etc., advocated by Prof. Percival Lowell, J. Luys, Herbert Spencer, Prof. K. Clifford, G. J. Romanes, Doctor Wiggs, Dr. Thomson and others. The Swâmi also puts forward his irrefutable arguments and conclusions in favour of the transcendent transcendental or the transcendental non-dualistic view-point of the Vedânta. He has dealt with many problems of different schools of psychology, philosophy and science.

The Swâmi urges that we should know what the true nature of the soul is, and that we should also discover our *relation* to the Absolute. He says that the *psyche* is the pure Ego or the Individuality "*which is not a thought, not a function of the mind, not a function of our intellect, not a sensation, not a percept or a concept, but which is the unifying element of all and which makes each one of them related to us*" (p. 134). So, the soul or *psyche* is not the state of mind or the faculty of the brain, but it is the consciousness or the Divine consciousness itself. The Swâmi expresses his conclusion in this way: "Suppose you say that matter has produced consciousness. That would be an idea, a conception, that means a state of consciousness, a state of mind. It does not say that you have gone behind consciousness to find out its

source. We can only find out the source of a thing by going beyond it, by transcending it, by going behind it. But can we go behind the state of consciousness?" (p. 34). The Swâmi says : "No." Because "when we are studying our states of consciousness, the very act of studying the states means we are ourselves new states of consciousness. We are not going behind the states of consciousness. We cannot find the source of consciousness, *because we have it; we cannot leave it; we are one with it*" (pp. 33-34). That is, the Swâmi means that the consciousness is not an entity separate from our Individuality and Divine existence, but it is our abiding Reality, or the Soul, in which we move, live and end our journey of the world. So he concludes that "these states of consciousness when properly understood, will help us to understand our relation to the Infinite or Infinite Existence, which is beyond time, beyond space, beyond causality; and which is the Absolute" (p. 168).

This is a very clear statement of the Swâmi about the real status and nature of consciousness, and this statement fully agrees with the conclusions of the modern science and philosophy. Because we are surprised to see today that the great scientist like Prof. Max Planck even confesses the same truth when he says : "Consciousness, I regard as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. *We cannot get behind consciousness.* Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness." (*Observer*, Jan. 25, 1931; Dr. N. K. Brahma : *Causality and Science*, p. 6). So, it is a welcome sign that the time is fast approaching when the wedding of science with philosophy will take place on the common ground of their ultimate goal and conclusion. And that hope is not at all a vague imagination; because we find today that Prof. Max Planck himself has confessed in his *Where is Science Going* : "* * in no

case can we rest assured that what is absolute in science today will remain absolute for all time. * * The absolute represents an ideal goal which is always ahead of us. * * That is to say, in the striving to reach the goal that we are always yearning for, and drawing courage from the fact that we are always coming nearer to it. To bring the approach closer and closer to truth is the aim and effort of all science" (pp. 199-200).

Really the physiological or psychological, or materialistic, or modern behaviouristic schools of psychology cannot transcend the categorical limitations of the soul, but the True psychology or as the Swâmi calls it the Hindu psychology undoubtedly proves that these categorical limitations are but the imposed qualities, which are not the 'Things-in-themselves, but they are mere the dreams, diversities or *delusions*.

The Swâmi asserts the *psyche* as the Divine existence and this existence which is denied by Hume who "had killed all psychology by saying there is no constant and permanent thing in experience," and that "it is Kant who afterwards has made a revival" of it (p. 129). The Swâmi defines this existence as the unchangeable absolute Reality. He says : "In the midst of all * * changes, the only thing that does not change is Existence" (p. 150). This immutable and intelligent existence is like the substance *i.e.*, the *matter* of Kant that suffers no change amidst all the changes of the appearance. It is the substrate of the change as Kant says. But we see that there lies a great difference between the permanent *existence* of the Swâmi and the permanent *substance* of Kant. Because it is true that Kant states about a permanent substance which is represented in consciousness as an abiding substrate, but this permanent substance fails to transcend the limitations of time and space. And Prof. Kemp Smith rightly informs us again that "Kant identifies the permanent which represents time in con-

sciousness with matter," whereas the Swâmi, as we find, identifies the permanent which absolutely transcends the categories of time and space, and so there remains no duality of matter and energy, no subject and object, no substance and illusion; but there remains only the Absolute or the Divine *psyche* or Soul which is the unbroken wholeness and the *summum bonum* of human achievement. The Swâmi's *existence* really finds out again a basic consciousness amidst the unceasing eternal streams of consciousness of some of the Buddhist thinkers. His permanent existence again gives also a death-blow to the perpetual change or the aimless time flux of Heraclitus, Bergson and Alexander. It is not even the 'primal vortex' of Empidocles and Anaxagoras. The Swâmi's *existence* is then "the existence, which is the Eternal Existence (and) is called in Vedânta *Brahman*, and it is the Absolute Truth" (p. 167). It is, therefore, the All love, All bliss and All knowledge. It is the Blessedness. It can be said again a deep penetration into the inner core of the Absolute and the unceasing feeling of our identity with the Absolute. In the self-revealing Light of the Absolute all the darkness of diversity or delusion commits suicide for ever and ever.

As regards the Absolute it is a Reality, that is our very existence and essence and that we need. The Swâmi says : "It is the consciousness of the Absolute and that is what we need" (p. 192). This Absolute can be experienced only by the light of realization, and by no other means. But some of the Western philosophers like Spinoza, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Lotze, Royce, Howison and others admit the intellectual apprehension of the Absolute. Through the mirror of intellect they claim to grasp fully the transcendental luminosity of the Absolute. Kant also maintains the view 'to catch the glimpse of Noumenon by the pure intellect.' And Prof. Royce says : "The Absolute is thought." But the Swâmi says that their views are untenable, because the

Absolute is the *felt* experience. It is not at all the unknown and unknowable 'Thing-in-itself' of Kant, but it 'can only be realized in an ecstasy of unutterable *feeling*,' as Plotinus expresses. It can be called a *recognition* of the forgotten Reality or a Divine awareness of identity of the individual soul with the Absolute. "It is the feeling. It is the Realization, the Divine realization." And this "*Realization*," the Swâmi says, "does not mean a mere intellectual apprehension of the thought of the *ideal*, but you will have to bring that *ideal* and harmonize that *ideal* with your daily life" (p. 185). Such is also the view of Prof. Bradley as he clearly discards even all the rational thoughts which belong to the realm of appearance and "cannot in any way express the nature of the Absolute" as Dr. Metz informs us.

The Swâmi really calls the "presence of Divinity in man" as the higher consciousness or the Godconsciousness and this Godconsciousness or the "Unchangeable Reality of the universe" is *one* and not *many* (p. 185). It is the one stupendous Whole that knows no divisions or parts in it (p. 179). It has even transcended the demarcations of *one* and *many* (p. 190). It is not at all the dictum as Prof. Royce says: "God cannot be one except by being many. Nor can we various selves be many unless in Him we are One." But it is true that the Swâmi's Absolute is not in essence the *one* or the *many*. Or, it can be said that his Absolute is not only rest, that is static, but it is change, that is dynamic, considering from the empirical view-point. But in the transcendental Unity it excels the rest and the change both; because these two opposites are the concepts of thought only and that means they are the appearances and, therefore, contingent. The ultimate Truth is absolutely raised from the contradictions of *one* and *many*. So, the Absolute of the Swâmi is not again the "One-in-many" of

Hegel. Because Hegel's Absolute or the Higher synthesis is like a night in which all the cows seem to be black. It shines always in and through the world of *becoming* and so it cannot go beyond the discrepancies of one and many.

The Absolute of the Swâmi is again the background of the world. "The only thing that does not pass away is the Absolute, and that Absolute is like the background of all phenomena. It is the *substratum*." (p. 194). And so it differs from the Absolute of Schelling who calls his Absolute the groundlessness, the groundless ground or the dark ground. The Swâmi's Absolute is again both the efficient and material causes of the world (p. 180), and so it has transcended the conceptions of the Absolute of Plato and Spinoza. Because Plato makes his 'Ideas' the ground of the 'world of sense', but he calls it not the cause of the world of sense. Spinoza also makes his Substance the substratum of the modes, *thought* and *extension*, but he denies to accept it as the cause of them. But it can be mentioned also that the Swâmi has accepted his Absolute as the cause of the world for the sake of creation or projection only, otherwise he has made the Ultimate unity of the Reality transcend the creation. He says : "The term *cause* can be applied to a thing only when it is related to the effect, so causeless cause or uncaused cause is an anomalous term. It does not refer to the Absolute." But it refers to knowable and personal God only who creates. "God is not the Absolute," he says. For the sake of creature and creation, God the Creator is accepted, but in essence God is no other than the Absolute.

Such is also the contentions of Professors Bradley and Bosanquet. Prof. Bosanquet regards God, Dr. Metz informs, "as not the all-comprehending Real but as an appearance, the highest of all appearances, but still falling short of the Absolute." The mystic philosopher

Plotinus says : "The God whom we commonly worship is the revelation, not the revealer." The revelation is the *Nous* or the Absolute of Plotinus and the Godhead of Meister Eckhart. Because both of them differentiate the knowable God from the *Nous* and the Godhead. They say that the Absolute is a superconceptual knowledge and so empirical thought cannot reach it. Plotinus puts it thus : "God (the Absolute) is neither to be expressed in speech nor in written discourses, * *." Meister Eckhart calls it *unknowing knowing* and says : "God is silence rather than speech." The Swâmi also says : "The Absolute cannot be expressed by words as it is beyond speech and beyond thought : *Avânmanaso' gocharam*" (p. 189). So, the Absolute is the "Wholly-other" as Prof. Otto uses the term, and its realization is the "flight of the alone to the Alone" in the words of Plotinus.

The Swâmi's Absolute again is not the 'finite-infinite-entirety' of Prof. Bosanquet. It is not at all Prof. Green's God or the Eternal Self-conscious *Whole* to whom the world always is. It is not even the 'completely self-contained or self-sufficient' Nature of Prof. Whitehead, as Prof. Whitehead's Nature though an "inclusive Whole" yet does not excel its "inwardly united members." The Swâmi's Absolute discards even the status of the "world-substance" of Prof. Alexander, because Prof. Alexander's 'world-substance' though forms the primal background of space-time, yet "is an all-present and all-penetrating continuum or a fluid or pure movements with a space-time character."

The Swâmi's Absolute is not again "a form of consciousness in which time is superseded without being annulled" as is maintained by Prof. Pringle-Pattison. And so it is not also "the all-inclusive present of the Absolute where nothing can enter and yet everything remains already there" as Prof. McGilvary urges. It is not again "the empty form totality" as Prof. Bos-

anquet frequently uses. Because the Swâmi's Absolute is the undivided pure existence-consciousness-bliss which can be *felt* and *experienced*. It is not at all the totality of parts or fragments of individual souls, but it is the all-reconciling unique unity and the Whole. And so, it is a fact that the Prof. McTaggart's and Prof. Haldane's Absolutes also fall short of it. Because we see that Prof. McTaggart's Absolute is a "unity of persons, a system of selves, related to each other" like the parts to the whole, and that Prof. Haldane's Absolute Reality is 'the identity of knowing and being' like Hegel, and it cannot transcend the conditions of thought and knowledge. It is neither again the Mind nor Experience of Croce, because Croce's Mind is though a Reality or Spirit, yet it is a system that is not free from the theoretical and practical activities, *knowing* and *acting*, nor the Pure Act of Gentile whose Mind is though not divided into any grades, yet is identical with the universe. It is not even the Truth or Reality of Belfort Bax, that is "the expression in the forms of reflective thought or of the highest realization of a given synthesis."

So, we see that the Swâmi's position throughout these discourses is free from dualism, qualified non-dualism, monism and even immanent transcendentalism, but it is purely transcendent transcendental, or it may be said, it is the transcendental non-dualistic view-point of Vedânta. It is not at all realistic, naïve, critical, ideal, neo or scientific; it is not idealistic, subjective, objective, speculative, or neo-; it is not even monistic, materialistic, neutral, ideal, pluralistic, or immanent as are held by Ernst Haeckel, Herbert Spencer, Spinoza, Russell, Lotze, Râmânûja, Nimvârka and others. The Swâmi's position or the philosophical stand-point in this volume is neither even deterministic, phenomenistic, transcendental idealistic nor absolutistic like Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Royce and others. It is not

also sceptic like Prof. Bradley whose Absolute is though a non-relational all-inclusive Whole yet it contains every thing merged, transmuted and absorbed and "histories without number" in itself. In this way Dr. Campbell's supra-rational Absolute cannot also stand. It is not again the static changeless Principle and the dynamic change which remain coupled together like the co-existence of thought and speech. Because the Divine undifferentiated and intelligent Twin is immanent as well as transcendent : "*visvottirna-visvâtmaka*," and it is the undistinguishable polarized subject-consciousness (*aham*) and object-consciousness (*idam*). It is not the Divine intelligent Energy which makes her dynamic dance of creation and destruction upon the breast of the dead Ground, because she is not even beyond her aspect of being-consciousness-bliss and dynamicity. And, so, in this respect the Swâmi's Absolute differs from the Tântrie system, Trika system of Kashmir, Saiva Siddhânta and the Virasaiva school.

The Swâmi also deals with the discourses on individuality and personality. "The word *personality*," he says, is derived from Latin *persona*, which means *musk*." The personality is subject to change, but the individuality never changes. Individuality signifies the 'greater self.' "The greater self means it is like the Self of the universe, the Cosmic Ego." It is really the basic principle, or as Fichte says "the *thinking principle*" of the world. According to the Swâmi the ordinary or empirical sense-knowledge, intuition or consciousness becomes always of the manifold, and so, it enters into the forms of time and space, into the functions of comparison, deduction and induction and subject-object relation. But the "Real knowledge," he says, "*is to go back to our simple nature and go to the centre*." (p. 203). This centre is the neutral point where shines alone the self-shining light of the supra-spatio-temporal Divine knowledge. This supreme knowledge is really an immediate

Divine awareness in its entirety and fullness. It is an absorption or sinking in the contemplation of God the Blessedness. All dreams and delusions then pale into insignificance and there remains only an undivided unique experience of the All-existence Absolute.

The Swâmi does not deny again the empirical world with its pragmatic utilities and changes like Sankara, Râmânujâ and Kant, but he negates, nay, he corrects it absolutely in the transcendental apperception of ultimate Truth and Reality. 'Selfishness' he calls the nescience and ignorance, and so he says : "It is ignorance that makes us selfish * *, but the light of knowledge will dispel that darkness of ignorance." Again, he says : "Then whether we believe in God or in scriptures or in dogmas and doctrines, that matters very little. These are non-essentials of religion" (p. 192). Really the popular religion is a set of all these doctrines and dogmas, and ordinary peoples take them as the essence and essentials. So he says that not only religion but the religion of religions "*is our knowledge and realization and love.*" According to him the attainment of the God-intuition is true religion and this God-intuition means to see God the Absolute face to face. This Absolute knows no descent or ascent, going beyond or coming down, and so he says : "Truly speaking, there is no longer any *going beyond* the Absolute, *going down* or *coming back* (*vyutthâna*) from the Absolute by one who has realized it : " (p. 196). He also denies the doctrine of eternal progress or evolution towards the Absolute as Herbert Spencer and others maintain, but he says that sooner or later everyone will go up to Him. Then the Swâmi turns his benignant eyes towards the suffering and wailing millions with unbound love and sympathy, feels for their solace and relief and says : "So, we must not live for ourselves, but we must live for the rest of the universe. We are here to help in

onward progress, not only for our own individual self, but of the whole humanity, of the whole race and of all living things." (p. 182). The Swâmi's love for his people, love for his nation and country, nay, love for the freedom of the whole humanity is very intense and burning, and these he has proved at least in his *India & Her People*, lectures delivered under the auspices of the Brooklyn Institute in America in 1906. His is not a selfish anxiety for his own salvation or *Mukti*. But he comes down to the common ground of his fellow human beings, nay, even to the so-called down-trodden animal and plant-world, and thus he appeals to the men of the universe : "We must not stop simply after doing something that will help our own people, our own nation, but we must go on doing things *that will help not only our own nation but all nations, not only human beings but all living creatures, lower animals, even plants*" (p. 182). How broad and loving is the heart of this beloved Child of Srî Râmakrishna ! He received his spiritual teachings and knowledge at the holy feet of his Great Master, and so, it has been possible for this mystic philosopher and Seer to make his philosophy and religion quite living, loving and practical !

We owe a debt of gratitude to Srimat Swâmi Pratyag-âtmânanda (formerly known as the Prof. Pramatha Nâth Mukhopâdhyâya) who is well-known for his ripe scholarship in Tantra and in various other systems of philosophy, for his kind help and valuable suggestions in revising the manuscripts before they were sent to the press.

The nice frontispiece by the late Frank Dvorak, the gifted artist of Prague, Czecho-Slovakia, enhances the beauty of this present work. The late Mr. Dvorak's name is well-known in India and abroad for his wonderful artistic creation of the life-size coloured portraits of Srî Râmakrishna and Srî Sârâdâ Devi.

We have added in this volume some footnotes for

making the subject matter explicit. The volume is a unique contribution to the field of philosophy, especially of psychology which will no doubt go to prove that psychology can throw new light upon this path so that we may pass beyond the range of the mind and senses, and to grasp the Higher glimpse of the Absolute that so long remained unexcavated in the dead mound of the Western psychology. We shall consider all our efforts for publishing these learned lectures successful if it wins its appreciation from all earnest lovers of knowledge and truth.

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CHAPTER I

TRUE PSYCHOLOGY

The study of psychology must be of great interest to us all, more so than a study of any other science because we are interested to know something about our own mind: what our own mind is, what the source of our mental functions is, what the various states of consciousness and their causes are. These subjects are interesting to us because they relate to our own self, to our own being. Other studies on different sciences like Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Physiology, or Biology, Astronomy etc., would lead to other results, which might be considered as of secondary value; but the study of our own mind should be regarded as of primary importance.

In modern colleges and universities psychology is taught as a Natural Science, like any other Natural Science, Physics, Chemistry, Physiology, or Anatomy. Its scope is to describe and explain the various states of consciousness, such as sensations, emotions, ideas, volitions, reasoning, and so on; and also to trace the physical causes which produce these states of consciousness and the physiological conditions under which they arise.

Modern psychology of this kind tells us that all these fluctuations of the mind are caused by the stimuli that we receive from the external world. In fact, they are the changes of the brain and the nervous

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system. It also tells us that there is no such thing as a soul or a mind as separate from the functions of the brain. All the teachings regarding the true nature of the soul or of the mind are discarded by modern psychology, because it is under the influence of physical science and it has, accordingly, confined itself to specializations of the nerve physiology and cerebral anatomy. It has adopted physical methods of research and most earnestly and diligently starting from the materialistic hypothesis that mind is produced by the mechanical process of insentient matter of the brain governed by mechanical laws, it has collected some facts and reached certain conclusions. These facts and conclusions are studied under the name of psychology. We have almost forgotten that the word *psychology* has been derived from the Greek term *psyche*, which means the *soul*. We use this word *psychology* not in the sense of the science of the *psyche* or soul but in the sense of the physiological origin and ordering of the mind. Now *psyche* or soul has been discarded out of this psychology which is taught today in colleges and universities. Like all other Natural Sciences, physiological psychology describes the different modes of motion of unintelligent particles which make up the brain cells in terms of consciousness and locates every state of consciousness as an activity of some sort in the cerebral hemispheres. In other words, the molecules of the cells of the brain produce a certain vibration or motion, and that vibration or motion is

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called a state of consciousness or sensation, and thus every state of consciousness is regarded as an activity of some sort in certain lobes or convolutions of the brain. For instance, when we see colour, the optical convolutions are active; when we hear music the temporal lobes are active etc. It is based entirely upon the conclusions of physiologists and medical men, who trace the influences of pathological conditions to the disorder of the brain and the nervous system. Therefore, the working hypothesis of physiological psychology is that every mental activity is caused by the function of the brain and nothing more or less. This we learn in schools and colleges, but by this we do not understand anything about our mind, or mental powers, or the origin of thought or the nature of our soul. And as all brain actions are governed by mechanical laws, so the rise of a thought, an idea, or a feeling is a result of the same mechanical process. This we gather from modern psychology.

Furthermore, physiological psychology teaches that in order to study the states of consciousness, we should study their corresponding relation with the probable neural conditions in the nervous system and in the brain. Then it goes on classifying the afferent and efferent nerves through which the nerve currents run into and out of the brain. They are known as the sensory or motor nerves. It does not define what sensation is, but it leaves that as a mystery of nature. We cannot solve this mystery by studying modern psychology, for, it does not explain how

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a particular mode of motion of the molecules of the brain cells can become a state of consciousness, such as an emotion, an idea, a feeling, or a thought, or a conscious entity. It tells us that a sensation is mysteriously caused by this motion (which is absolutely mechanical) of the unintelligent particles of matter which make up the cells of the brain and of the nervous system.

Psychology as a Natural Science, however, does not, in its last analysis, stand on any solid ground. On the contrary, its foundation is very shaky, and the whole structure is ever ready to fall to pieces. Why? Because these states of consciousness, which are only brain activities, are not continuous states. They last only for a moment; they rise and fall. But why should such unstable, passing conditions produce a lasting and stable parallel feeling or thought or sensation or a percept or a concept in the mind substance? It cannot be explained. It is left as a mystery.

Secondly, motion produces nothing but motion. How is it possible for mechanical activities of the brain cells to produce consciousness which is not motion but the knower of motion? There are books written on analytical psychology, neural psychology, history of psychology, but they are nearly all based on the same materialistic or *quasi*-materialistic foundation, which is extremely fragile. *New Psychology* by E. W. Scripture, Ph.D., Director of the Yale Psychological Laboratory, is the result of the mechanical

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experiments which were started by Prof. W. Wundt of Leipzig, in Germany. It tells us how to measure the vibrations of the nerve currents at the time of a pleasant or unpleasant feeling or of any particular pain or pleasure, and contains the minute description of the various sensations as regards their time and place that can be known through mechanical methods and by the help of fine instruments. Such being the case, we inquire: What will be the foundation of True psychology?

This question naturally rises in our minds. True psychology will not only inform its students of the physiological conditions of the brain, nerves and nerve centres of individuals, but also the true nature of the mind, our psychic existence, its scope, its relation, and its continuity. It is not metaphysics nor mental philosophy, but it is the science of the *psyche* or the soul, and its foundation is Truth.

By the word 'science' we mean systematized and classified truths appertaining to anything. We do not mean by science a generalization of opinions. A mere consensus of opinion of a few individuals does not make a science. So when we say the science of the *psyche*, we do not refer by that term to the consensus of opinion of some scientists who may say there is no such thing as the soul or *psyche*. But we refer to the truths and the systematization and the classification of those truths appertaining to the soul or the *psyche*—that is True psychology. Modern psychologists do not mean by *psychology* a 'science

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of the soul,' simply because the soul is beyond the reach of the senses. They do not even call it a science of the mind, because *mind* refers to a continuous substance. Therefore, after rejecting these definitions, they mean by modern psychology the description of the states of consciousness, which are constantly changing and which have no permanent basis or background.

The science of True psychology, on the other hand, is that science which consists of the systematization and classification of truths relating to the soul or that self-conscious entity which thinks, feels and knows. True psychology recognizes the existence of body, mind and soul. There are three things. But the modern physiological psychology admits the existence of body only, and nothing else. It says that there is no mind separate from the body and no soul to speak of. True psychology tells us that what we call the physical body is the dwelling house of the soul. It is manufactured by the soul which is the source of intelligence and self-consciousness. Its primary individuality lies even beyond mind and thought. It is superior to that which is material, organic, mental or intellectual. Mind is the internal instrument (*Antahkaraṇa*).¹ According to True psychology, it can be divided as subjective and objective mind.

1. But *Antahkaraṇa* is not an internal instrument or organ (*indriya*) according to *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* and *Vivaraṇa*. According to *Bhāmatī* and *Ratnaprabhā* it is recognized as an *indriya*.

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Subjective mind is that medium through which the objective mind, which is directly connected with the brain and with the external world, through the gateway of the sense organs, receives intelligence from the soul. The objective mind in turn comes in touch with the external world and gives the 'sense manifold.' The sense manifold as such is without 'sense' or meaning. It is the subjective mind which gives sense or meaning to the sense data. The mind with these two phases subjective and objective was produced primarily for the use of the soul, as its instrument. Though it can be divided into two parts apparently, in reality, there is only one mind. It has a subjective state and an objective state. The subjective state is in close touch with the soul, and the objective state is in close touch with the brain. The subjective mind receives the impression of intelligence from the soul and appears as intelligent. This is the primary office of the mind. Mind substance is made up of finer matter, which is unintelligent by nature. It receives intelligence from somewhere which we call the soul or the source of intelligence (*Jñâna*) and appears as intelligent. The objective mind, through the gates of senses, comes in contact with the body, receives information regarding the physical environment in which it lives, and conveys this information to the soul, which is called then the perceiver. If there were no instrument of the mind, the soul would be sightless, hearingless, smellless, tasteless and touchless.

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Cr, in other words, there would be no avenue to receive any information about the environment. Then the brain will go on receiving the impressions of colour, sound, and so forth; but there will be no sensation of colour or sound to anyone, as it is in a dead body. In a dead body the vibrations of ether which are called colour come in contact with the open eyes of the dead body, and then with the retinae, and produce changes in the molecules of the optic nerves, and those changes are carried by the optic nerves to the cortex of the brain, where will occur other molecular changes mechanically. But there would be no sensation of colour. Similarly, you may beat a drum near the ears of a dead body. The vibrations will come in, but there will be no sensation of sound. If there is no mind attached to the brain, the soul does not perceive any object of perception, like colour or sound or smell or odour or taste or touch or feeling. If there were no mind to receive sense impressions from the material side and to present them to the soul, the soul would never be advised of this physical existence; and consequently, it will have no knowledge of the objective world. Knowledge of the objective world is only possible for the soul through its contact with the mind substance which is both the subjective mind and the objective mind. For this reason, it is called by some objective mind, by some active mind, by others environmental mind, and so on. The objective

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mind gets the information from the external world through the senses and presents them to the subjective mind; while the subjective mind is that part of the mind which receives intelligence from the soul and determines the nature of the objective impressions by deduction or direct perception and decides what kind of sensation or feeling has arisen. Such is the function of the subjective mind. Although there is one mind, still on account of these two distinct functions it is classified as subjective and objective.

In somnambulism and hypnotic sleep it has been discovered that the subjective mind is capable of acting independently of the objective mind. It has distinct powers of its own.

Furthermore, the subjective mind can be influenced and controlled by suggestion. Here I must say that auto-suggestion is stronger than any external suggestion. A number of boys were hypnotized, and suggestions were given that one was a monkey, or up in a hill or thrown in a lake. You would laugh to split your sides if you saw those boys. An infant is at first purely subjective in mind. Objective reasoning develops gradually through education and experience.

The subjective mind possesses most marvellous memory. The latent memory of a very wide range comes out when the objective mind is in abeyance or in sleep. Memory of past lives may be possible. Col. De Rochas hypnotized a girl who remembered

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some of her previous lives.

Subjective mind is never asleep. Most of the productions of a genius are but the outpouring of impressions of the subjective mind. Talent, however, is the result of the objective reason. Abnormal passions and appetites are in the subconscious mind which can be cured by giving suggestions to the subjective mind. Most of the healing comes from the subjective mind. The healing power of *Prâṇa* comes through faith which connects with the subjective mind.

The attributes of the human mind indicate limitation and that is subject to the laws of physical being. The first attribute which our mind possesses is imagination, that is, the power to conceive the existence of a set of circumstances which may exist or may not. With the help of this faculty all other attributes will come.

Another attribute is reason or comparison. 'Reason' consists in taking that which we know and comparing it with something else that we know. When reason is aided by imagination, then it becomes induction. For instance, when we see smoke on the hill top and imagine that there must be fire. Because our previous experience taught us where there is smoke there must be fire. Thus induction involved reasoning or comparison aided by imagination.

All scientific knowledge depends upon induction, which means imagination based upon comparison

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and reasoning. It is to trace the unknown cause from seeing the effect.

Another attribute of mind is deduction, which is different from induction. It is to trace the effect from the known cause. After watching a heavy rainfall when we trace its effect in the swelling of the river we call this 'deduction.' But when we see the swelling of the river we call this deduction. But when we see the swelling of the river and trace its cause to rainfall by reasoning, it is inductive method of reasoning. If our senses are in a normal condition, then we are not apt to make mistakes, and we have deduction of direct perception of the objective mind. But the direct and immediate perception of the subjective mind is called *intuition*. This faculty proves our mind's relation to the soul, which is all intelligence (*chaitanyaghana*), or the source of intelligence.

In True psychology, the word *soul* means pure intelligence, and nothing else. There is no thinking, no reasoning, no feeling of any other kind in the soul. But thinking, reasoning, feeling etc. are various attributes or functions of the mind substance, both subjective and objective. Of these reason and imagination are imperfect attributes of mind. Neither reason nor imagination can be perfect. Because they have a limitation. We can not perfect them. Reason is comparison. What shall it be compared with in the last analysis? If knowledge is the nature of the soul, there is no possi-

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blity of comparison in perfect knowledge. In perfect knowledge there is no comparison, but reason exists in comparison, and so when reason is perfected it will kill itself. There can neither be reason nor imagination, because imagination as such will never lead to or become knowledge. Imagination will be that dubious, inquiring and explaining state, while soul always knows. It does nothing but knows. Soul does not reason. It is the mind that reasons. Soul only knows. It is intelligence. It does not inquire. It is self-evidence and self-assurance. Therefore, it has no imagination. That which inquires and tries to find out the source or cause is not the soul. It is the action of the mind. And so long as there is no enquiry in the soul there cannot be any induction. Induction is in the mind, because it depends upon reason and imagination, as I have already explained.

The soul cannot be destroyed. We cannot think of the destruction of intelligence. We cannot imagine it, because the soul has no imagination; consequently, it cannot imagine its own destruction. That would be impossible.

Its existence is eternal. It cannot know its beginning. It cannot imagine its beginning, because it always knows. Its nature is absolute presence. Try to think of your beginning in your consciousness, in your knowledge. You might think of the beginning of your body, brain, earth, and of everything else, but try to think of your own beginning as intelligence.

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You cannot. Similarly you cannot think of your death. Try to think of your death as knower. You cannot. You only know eternal presence.

That presence is the window of the soul. There are imposed limitations, subjective and objective, which appear to restrict the presence of the soul and make it *speak* through the window. But it has presence inside the window, outside and beyond. Therefore, it is potentially omnipresent. When this presence is perfected—it can be perfected by taking off the limitations; then it becomes omnipresent. Now through this we can explain why it is possible for one mind to send thoughts to another, which we call telepathy. I will come to it later on, when I describe the powers of the mind, telepathy and thought transference. There is this Cosmic mind, omnipresent mind, and our minds are little eddies in that Cosmic mind, omnipresent mind. They are all connected through the Cosmic mind. When I think, I can send that thought to your mind through the Cosmic mind, through mental space like wireless telegraphy through physical space. Wireless does not touch the mental space. It sends a vibration or electrical current in this space, but the same condition when produced in the mental space becomes telepathy or thought transference.

Next the soul has power. This is another attribute of the soul. It is potentially omnipotent. That power can be made into unlimited power, can be perfected, and then we become one with the

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omnipotent. Next the soul has knowledge; there it is potentially omniscient. Next the soul has love; therefore it has the potentiality of perfect love or creative Energy. Note that our soul has the creative power. You may say our mind has the creative power, but mind cannot do anything without being in close touch with intelligence or the source of intelligence. It must be intelligent mind to be the creator. And we have that love in us, which is the creative Energy of the universe, and that creative Energy of the universe when perfected becomes perfect love, and that perfect love is the Creator. When these attributes are perfected in an individual, the individual then becomes one with the Universal Soul.

There is a Universal Soul, a great Soul (*Paramâtmâ*) and our souls are the phases, or you may call them parts of the great Soul. So many people are sitting here. Each one has a soul. Take it collectively; everywhere, in other spheres and planets, there will be infinite individual souls. And infinite individual souls mean that one Infinite Soul; it is the same thing.

True psychology when properly applied will explain the power of suggestion, telepathy, hypnotism, mental healing, the principles of Christian Science, which cannot be explained by physiological psychology. Physiological psychology which we study in schools and colleges describes all these as impossible. They never touch them; they never

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try to explain them. It is a difficult realm, beyond their sphere and scope. So they leave those things aside. But True psychology embraces them all. True psychology has not been taught in the West. It has been taught in the East. It explains all psychic phenomena recorded by Psychical Research Societies. It will also explain all truths in connection with Spiritism. Such truths relate more or less to psychic powers of the subjective mind. True psychology embraces that science which has been called by some 'mentology.' Those who use this term *mentology* give the name of mind to that which we have called *soul*. That is, our description of the *soul*, you will remember, may be called also mind, as some of them have done, and so they call it mentology instead of psychology. According to them, mentology is the science of the mind, which is behind matter, behind atoms, behind electrons. They hold that mind creates electrons and produces atoms, molecules and germs of nature. Thought is in and behind the vibration of electrons, and thought forms existed before matter has aggregated. Thought forms are caused by the mind, the force of the mind, which is the same as the soul with the subjective mind, and before any external form is made, there is a thought form. Most sensitive photographic plates will take a picture of the thought form. They are materialized as electrons in vibration, although outwardly we do not see them with our eyes. The electrons produce atoms,

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and then molecules, elements and gradually produce the forms of the material objective world. In that way thought forms have materialized, through the power of the mind. So what you see today in the universe, the earth, moon, stars, planets and everything, are nothing but the materialization of the finer thought forms which existed in the Cosmic mind from the beginningless past. Those are the Ideas of Plato, pure Ideas. These pure Ideas existed eternally in the past and will exist eternally in the future as patterns in the Cosmic mind.

Now, for instance, you have seen a horse, but you have not seen a perfect horse. You have seen a red or a white or a black horse, but is that a perfect horse? No. Perfect horse cannot manifest on this plane because there are limitations. It is the thought form of a horse in the Cosmic mind, and that form will never be fully manifested on this earth. Our horse will never be a perfect horse on this plane; but the perfect pattern will remain in the Cosmic mind from eternity to eternity. When this earth is destroyed and another planet would be inhabited by horse, then that pattern will work and materialize the horse through the natural laws of the environments.

Now apply the same thing with human beings. You have seen human forms. We are human beings. You have seen a red, white or a black man, but you have not seen a perfect man. That perfect is in the mind of the Cosmic Being. It is a

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pattern, a thought form. That will never come down to this plane; but we are approaching that pattern and trying to become perfect, and that is what we expect to be doing on this plane. We may not ever be able to reach it, but our attempt is to manifest that pattern on this plane, and Christ is that type. It is in the Cosmic mind, that is the same as Logos, the same as the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That Word was the Logos, the perfect man in the thought pattern in the Cosmic mind. Jesus was the human man, and Christ was the perfect man. So Jesus became Christ afterwards.

And so Buddha became the perfect type; but we are all approaching that type. Mind is the creator and director. Now these mentologists claim that mind is the force which directs the finer particles of electrons, and creates them from its own being, as it were, and then produces atoms, and atoms when drawn or attracted together become molecules, and molecules when brought together become the elements of nature, and then we see the whole gross physical universe. So the gross physical universe is the materialization of the thought forms which exist in the Cosmic mind.

Now, True psychology has been taught in India from very ancient times, but that True psychology has not been taught in the West, as I have already said; but if we study the Hindu psychology, which is as old as the Vedas, we find that they admitted the existence

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of the body, mind and soul, three things, and their relations. Body is the physical organ, and the senses are the special organs, and brain is the internal organ co-ordinating and controlling the sense organs. Mind is in touch with the brain which is its chief organ on the physical plane. And then there is the subjective mind which is called *Buddhi* in Sanskrit. We may call the subjective mind that *body* which is in closer touch with the source of intelligence, the all-intelligence. *Buddhi* is not the reasoning faculty but the faculty in intuition, and it is nearest to the Soul. It is practically the first or the highest manifestation of the mind substance, and this mind substance evolves and produces various modifications or the faculties and attributes. They are known by different names as different states of consciousness, and these different states of consciousness are those things which we have now, these feelings, these ideas. So by studying the Oriental psychology, especially Hindu psychology, you get a clear idea of what True psychology is.

CHAPTER II

CONSCIOUSNESS

In this chapter we will study the nature of our consciousness. In the last chapter we learned what physiological psychology teaches and what True psychology teaches. Physiological psychology, like any other Natural Science, tells us that consciousness is produced by the activity of the brain cells. It is, in other words, the function of the brain. In all the modern schools and colleges and also among the medical practitioners, scientists, anatomists, biologists, it is said that mind, thought, intelligence, consciousness, all these are different terms of the same thing, and that they are produced by the combination of material particles which make up our nervous system and the brain. When we see any sight, some parts of the brain like the optical convolutions are acting. When we hear a sound, the temporal lobes are acting; and so on. In other words, they believe in the production theory.

There are different theories that have been advanced by materialistic thinkers, who consider that matter is the origin of all mental functions, thoughts, ideas, and so on. One of these theories is the production theory. The production theory teaches us that mind, thought, intelligence, consciousness, or whatever you may call it, is produced by the nervous system

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and the brain. The production theory also tells us that the mind is conterminous with the brain activities. When the brain activities stop the mind also stops, and if the brain is in disorder, the mind also is in disorder, and when the brain is destroyed the mind, consciousness, intelligence, and everything is destroyed. And they try to explain how this consciousness is produced. Of course, many of them regard it as a mystery, but this mystery when they try to solve they make different hypotheses, and one of the hypotheses is that sensations are like things which when entering into our brain are metamorphosed into thoughts, ideas, just in the same way as when we eat something the food-stuff is metamorphosed. Now this food-stuff, after entering into our system, goes through a chemical change, and as the food-stuff falls into the stomach and goes through a chemical change, so these sensations, falling into the instrument of the brain, are changed into thoughts, ideas, emotions, volitions, and so on, as if the sensations are something, like food-stuff, which, falling into the brain, will be metamorphosed into various mental states of consciousness.

This theory does not explain the real cause of mind or mental functions, and all the different psychic phenomena which we have noticed perhaps in our lifetime or which have been recorded by the scientific thinkers, as for instance, of the Psychical Research Society and other philosophers. These

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facts, which are admitted as facts, cannot be explained by this production theory. The brain does not produce consciousness, but it is something different from the activity of the brain.

Percival Lowell is one of the materialistic scientists, and he explains that this consciousness is nothing but a nerve glow; that is, when we get sensations, the molecules of the nerves become agitated; they vibrate; and when these vibrations, for instance, from the eyes or through the optic nerve, or from the ears through the auditory nerves,—when the vibrations of the molecules of these nerves are carried into the brain, these vibrations of the molecules come in touch or face to face with another set of molecules which are not in accordance with this particular mode of vibration, and there something like a bombardment takes place, and that friction produces a kind of glow, nerve glow, and that is our consciousness. That is a materialistic theory which explains our consciousness. I will read to you his own words from one of my own printed lectures, which will explain to you clearly what Percival Lowell says :

“When we have, as we say, an idea, what happens inside of us is probably like this: the neural current of molecular change passes up the nerves, and through the ganglia reaches at last the cortical cells.”

“* * When it reaches the cortical cells, it finds a set of molecules which are not so accustomed to this special change. The current encounters resistance, and in overcoming this resistance it causes the cells to glow. This white-heating of

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the cells we call consciousness. Consciousness, in short, is probably nerve glow."

Now this is the materialistic idea.

Another materialist, J. Luys says that it is just like the red heat or white heat of a piece of iron when put into a furnace, and it is a kind of glow, and that glow is consciousness.¹ You see, that theory does not give us anything further. But the very nature of consciousness is to know; the riddle of consciousness is how this nerve glow will produce knowledge. That they do not explain.

Even Herbert Spencer believed in this theory of metamorphosis of the physical, material and unconscious vibrations of the particles of matter producing consciousness in a mysterious manner; but that mystery he could not solve. Herbert Spencer was an agnostic. He did not believe in the existence of a soul as separate from the activity of the brain; he could not positively assert that there was such a thing. He could not explain positively as a cerebralist or a mentalist would do, but he explained the states of consciousness as something like a metamorphosis which has taken place in our brain in an inscrutable way. He says :

"Ideas are like the successive chords and cadences brought out, which successively die as the other ones are sounded, and it would be as proper to say that these passing chords and cadences thereafter exist in the piano as it is proper to say that passing ideas thereafter exist in the brain."

1. Cf. Swami Abhedananda : *Life Beyond Death*, p. 12

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He compares the brain with the piano, but there he makes a mistake in so far as he assumes that the piano produces the chords and cadences by itself without the help of the mind of the musician. By right, this illustration would have been a correct one if he had explained that the brain was an instrument like the piano, but that it required a musician and a mind outside of the piano to produce the music, and that the music is not in the piano but in the mind of the musician. The music is also in the mind of the one who hears it. In the piano there are only vibrations of its strings, which are not the music, but the material causes of the music. But as he explains it, he does not give any satisfactory answer to the question, *viz.*, what consciousness is; nor does it solve the other problems which arise in our minds regarding the nature of the soul and the nature of consciousness.

There is another theory that is called the combination theory, and this combination theory tells us that there are two lines running parallel; one is the neural current; the other is the stream of states of consciousness. They are running parallel. Prof. W. K. Clifford is one of the advocates of this theory, which is called the combination theory. According to him and others of the same school,

“Consciousness is a complex thing made up of elements, a stream of feelings. The action of the brain is also a complex thing made up of elements, a stream of nerve messages. For every feeling in consciousness there is at the same time a nerve message of the brain. Cons-

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consciousness is not a simple thing, but complex; it is the combination of feelings into a stream. Inexorable facts connect our consciousness with this body that we know; and that not merely as a whole, but the parts of it are connected severally with parts of our brain action. If there is any similar connection with a spiritual body it only follows that the spiritual body must die at the same time with the natural one."

So it is considered like an emanation of the brain action which is running simultaneously with the nerve messages. These nerve messages are received from our sense organs in the form of light, colour, sound, odour, taste and touch. All these are the nerve messages, or, in other words, they are the primary sensations, and these primary sensations produce streams of consciousness, separate and parallel. But why a nerve message would induce a parallel state of consciousness these upholders of the combination theory do not explain. They do not know why an elementary 'function' in nature should thus present two parallel and 'inexorably connected' phases, *viz.*, a nerve message and a feeling. Of course, there is such a thing as a stream of consciousness. We know that there is also a change in the flow of consciousness.

First of all, we shall have to understand the different conditions of our consciousness. For instance, when we are conscious of a thing, we feel that it is a part of consciousness. I am conscious of the chair. It is not the consciousness of somebody else, but it is my personal consciousness. Now that feeling of my

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personal consciousness exists in all states of consciousness. It may have. For instance, when you have a thought, that thought is of yourself. In this room we are sitting. There are so many people. Each one has a thought. Now, each one has a thought, that is not a common thought, that is floating in the air, but each mind has a thought of his own that he claims as 'my thought.' Your thought will not be the same as that of another person. It is not coming at random, but every thought, idea, feeling, emotion or conception that rises in my mind has a particular connection with myself. And that is inevitable. Under all conditions you will find that it is my will, my desire, my feeling, my thought, my idea, and my consciousness. Now, how that is so is not explained by either of these two theories, the production theory or the combination theory. The production theory will say that produced by brain activity at random a thought rises; but why should it be my thought? What will determine this inevitable reference to *me*? They cannot answer that question of personal ownership of any and every thought. So in modern psychology or rather physiological psychology, you will at every turn be confronted with that great question. That question has not been answered, *viz.*, why is it that any thought which is a function of the brain would be called a particular state of my personal consciousness?

When two persons go to sleep, for instance, John

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and Henry, they go to sleep with certain ideas in their minds. And the ideas which John has in his mind differ from the ideas which Henry has. They are sleeping in the same room. When they wake up John takes up the thread of his ideas, and he does not think of the ideas which Henry has. And Henry takes up the thread of his ideas independently of the thoughts and ideas which John might have in his mind. That will give you a particular idea of the different states; that is, one mind is distinct from the other mind, and John claims that it is his thought, his idea, or his feeling, distinct from the feelings of others. Of course, John and Henry have in this case two distinct brains 'asleep' under nearly similar conditions. But the two never 'mix their threads.' In sleep as well as in the waking state, each not merely keeps its 'thread' apart, but offers it—each distinct item of it—to be exclusively owned by one person and not by the other. It is either John's or Henry's. Thus the facts that the threads are kept separate all along, that they are apparently never broken, that they obey the laws of an ordered succession coupled with the facts that each is recognized, remembered, reconstructed and 'owned' by a distinct person, John or Henry, who functions as a continuous *Self* or *Me*—these facts will never be completely covered by a cerebral explanation, either of the one kind or the other. Surely these things are not happening at random, but they are coming in a systematic way, rising in

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our consciousness and creating what we call states of our consciousness. These states are changing within my personal consciousness. The thought or idea or feeling which I had yesterday has gone for ever. It will never come back in the same way. You may feel a similar sensation by the repetition of the contact of the object to the sense organ, but it would not be the same sensation. Every day it is a different sensation, and you will feel that difference very clearly, if you will only pay your attention to the difference that exists.

The physiological explanation of this would be that the sensations are caused by the vibration of the molecules of the external object. Now our brain, before it has received that particular vibration of light, may be called a virgin state of the brain. Now the impression that would be produced in the brain that has not received a sensation of light will be different from the impression which will come later, because the first impression has already got a tinge, and that tinge remains in the brain; but the second time or third time or after a hundred times when the impression comes on the brain, it comes not on the pure brain but on the brain that is already impressed by some ideas. So every time you have an impression, it is not the same in intensity and in its nature as it was before. So you may eat the same thing again and again. You will find that after a while you get tired of that thing. You may hear music, the same music repeatedly, and after a while you

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will find that you become so tired you do not want to hear it again. The same experiences that you have gone through and that you have realized as ideal experiences,—the time may come when the same experiences would make you feel disgusted. Why is that? That shows that it depends upon the changes that your mind is going through. The idea is not the same. Apparently we call it the same feeling, but when you observe minutely you will find it is not the same feeling. It is similar yet there is a great deal of difference on account of the changes that are going on in our consciousness. So our states of consciousness are constantly changing.

The personal consciousness seems to be continuous. Although there are changes in our consciousness, still we feel that there is a continuity—an under-current of the same consciousness. I was conscious yesterday. Then I went to sleep. I am conscious now. But there seems to be a continuity. We cannot imagine a gap in our consciousness. When you go to sleep you might think that at the time of your sleep you have a gap of consciousness; that is, you have gone into oblivion and your consciousness is cut off. But that is a mistake. Our consciousness is not entirely cut off. The stream is running but the particular state of consciousness which we have at the time of our waking state is not perhaps so strong, so vivid, so coherent and consistent at the time of our dream state or when we sleep. It is

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weaker and more plastic, but still the existence of the different dream states is as true in a dream or while we are sleeping as are the waking states when we are awake. So there is no gap of consciousness. It is continuous.

That continuity cannot be broken even after death. According to True psychology, the continuity of this consciousness can never be broken. We cannot think of it, cannot think that this will go into nothingness. If consciousness is something, the law is : that something has not come out of nothing, and it can never go back to nothing. If consciousness has come out from the particular combination of matter in the brain, then we will have to admit that matter contains consciousness also. Otherwise, consciousness would be a thing which has come out from matter where there was no consciousness, which would be an absurd idea. When you say that consciousness that exists once has gone into non-existence, it would be similarly absurd. We cannot imagine such a thing. So if consciousness is a unique reality at present, *i.e.*, not resolvable into modes of matter and motion, then it has been such a reality before from the beginningless time, and it will continue to be such a reality throughout endless eternity. And this will be in accordance with the scientific principle of conservation.

But consciousness of particular things may be different in one person from that of another person. It chooses some parts in exclusion of other parts of

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knowledge. Suppose you go to a strange city,—say, four people go to Paris. They never saw Paris before. When these four persons, after remaining in Paris for some time, come back and give their conceptions of Paris, the four descriptions would be entirely different. One person has noticed perhaps all the gay quarters, and how the Parisians live and how frivolous they are. Another would simply pay attention to the beautiful architecture. His mind is running along all the beautiful architectural points that are unique. Another will go to the Louvre and go to see nothing but all the collections, and he will remember those things. And another will perhaps see something that the other three have not seen, that is, their freedom and independence and how they live the life of freedom. A moralist will see vice and wickedness and hypocrisy and so on. You see, the consciousness of each individual will pick up certain things from the mass of the environment, and that is the peculiarity in our states of consciousness. It picks up certain things and rejects others. But consider what the case would be like if consciousness, instead of being a chooser, were only a passive product or recipient. There would not be any choice of picking up among the whole mass, but it would be a kind of bombarding of those multifarious vibrations which we must know or 'photograph' at once, and we could not pick up one thing from many hundreds of other things.

Now these theories have explained that conscious-

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ness is a complex thing ; as some say, it is a compound thing. Each sensation contains an atom of consciousness, and when these sensations are brought together, these minute atoms of consciousness will form a compound. That will make our whole consciousness ; so the whole consciousness consists of parts, or atomic consciousnesses. But that will require a kind of division in our consciousness, which is very difficult to make. We cannot divide and pulverize the states of consciousness, because one state lapses into the other, and we cannot separate them as we can separate grains of matter. Imagine that a wave rises when we think of *A*, *B*, *C*. Suppose there is a horizontal line, and *A* makes a curve like that ; and *B* makes another curve. Before the *A* curve is finished, the *B* curve rises. Then the *C* curve rises, including both, so one lapses into the other. Each state of consciousness has a fringe which lapses into another state of consciousness. And this we cannot deny, because every thought or idea is like a surging of a wave which has behind it a similar wave, or vibration of thought or whatever you may call it. But as we cannot cut one curve of the wave as distinct from the other curves, so we cannot cut out one state of consciousness, which is a curve, as distinct and separate from the other curves which preceded and are following them.

So cause and effect are like waves. Waves go in this way : if we count the first wave, which is preceded by another wave, and call this first wave as

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an effect, then the wave that preceded it is the cause, and the wave that follows it will be another effect. So this wave that I have already called an effect will be the cause of the next wave. So that which is the cause of a future wave will be the effect of the previous wave. In this way you can understand that cause and effect are the same; only we are looking at it from two different view points; from the view point of the previous cause it is an effect, and from the view point of a future effect it is a cause.

So these mental states cannot be separated and cut into units of sensation, as some people think. Of course, there is a theory that each cell in our body has consciousness, has a mind, has thought and memory, and these minute cells with their units of consciousness make up the individual consciousness of a person. But that theory seems to put the cart before the horse, because who knows, imagines or theorizes about the conscious state of a cell? How do we know? It is by our own consciousness.

When you study through a microscope the activity of a minute brain cell, which is moving perhaps, or showing some signs of mental activity, then who is studying? The observer's mind. If the observer's mind were not there, then all this activity would not be interpreted in terms of consciousness by anyone. We cannot, surely, enter into the mental state or state of consciousness of that minute cell which possesses mind or soul, or whatever you may call it. It would be a secondary knowledge, that is, we can

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only infer. It is an induction by reasoning and not a direct perception. Therefore, John Stuart Mill said when man dissects the brain and does not find any soul, consciousness or mind, he denies it. But the very fact of denying the existence of soul, consciousness or mind presupposes another mind which is denying. If you deny and say: "No, it does not exist," that means you admit the pre-existence of a state of consciousness. So our state of consciousness is the most primary thing, the first thing. You cannot go behind it. By what and how will you go behind it?

That idea has been given by one of the great scientists, G. J. Romanes. He says :

"We cannot think any of the facts of external nature without presupposing the existence of a mind which thinks them, and therefore, so far at least as we are concerned, mind is necessarily prior to everything else. It is for us the only mode of existence which is real in its own right, and to it, as to a standard, all other modes of existence which may be inferred must be referred. Therefore, if we say that mind is a function of motion, we are only saying, in somewhat confused terminology, that mind is a function of itself. Such then I take to be a general refutation of materialism."

Now that idea you must remember, that mind is prior to everything else. So when we are studying our states of consciousness, the very act of studying the states of consciousness means we are ourselves new

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states of consciousness. We are not going behind the states of consciousness. We cannot find the source of consciousness, because we have it; we cannot leave it; we are one with it. We can only study the different states of consciousness.

Suppose you say that matter has produced consciousness. That would be an idea, a conception, that means a state of consciousness, a state of your mind. It does not say that you have gone behind consciousness to find out its source. We can only find out the source of a thing by going beyond it, by transcending it, by going behind it. But can we go behind the state of consciousness? No. First of all not by going into unconsciousness, can we find consciousness; but all our knowledge will depend upon the comparison of certain states of consciousness with certain others, and everything that will come to us as knowledge will be secondary. The primary thing would be our state of consciousness.

Then what is consciousness? Is it the same as knowledge? Now, that is another question which is very puzzling. It is knowledge of a primary kind. It is not the knowledge of particulars. Knowledge of particulars will come afterwards. First of all we become conscious before we know the particulars. We can be conscious of a thing without knowing the particulars. For instance, blindfold a man and take him out to a strange place, in a room decorated with rushes, or anything, or Chinese furniture which he has never seen; or take him to a new landscape and

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open his eyes there, and he at once is conscious of himself and his surroundings, but he does not at that instant know anything particularly. He is conscious of everything that surrounds him. That is consciousness; but in order to know each thing particularly, he will have to reason; he will have to compare before he knows what it is. It might be all plaster of Paris or a kind of card-board or scenes painted upon canvas as on the stage. When you go on the stage or see the beautiful scenery that is represented on a stage, say of an opera, Wagner's opera, the most wonderful spectacular sight there, everything will appear to you as real. You are conscious of that but you do not know what it is. And that consciousness is a kind of knowledge which gives the foundation of all our knowing states. It is the substratum. So consciousness is not knowledge.

Knowledge comes by comparison. That is a function of reason. So you will know the difference. Consciousness means the establishment of relations between subject and object. It is instantaneous. We do not require any thought or calculation to become conscious of a thing. It is at once instantaneous. There has no time elapsed between the linking up on the subject and object and the state of consciousness which 'apprehends' it. As soon as our eyes are open there is consciousness of light, and we do not have to think over the different states before we become conscious of the thing. So, that will be the definition of consciousness. It is the establishment

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of relations between subject and object. It knows nothing of time. Time comes in the review or representation of this primary relation. It has nothing to do with liking or disliking. Whether you like the sensation or not, that has nothing to do with your consciousness. Like or dislike is secondary to the consciousness itself. For instance, if you are blindfolded and taken into a den of thieves, then have your eyes uncovered, you find yourself in the den of thieves. Before you feel that you do not like it, you are conscious of the situation. You are conscious that you are in the den of thieves, and that consciousness may make you feel that you do not like it. If you have nothing to lose and nothing to fear, the consciousness of that situation will not make you uneasy. Like or dislike does not count there; as far as your consciousness is concerned you simply know where you are. The thief *in* you might be asleep, therefore, you did not like the thieves. When the thief *in* you might be awakened through association, you would like the thieves. We do not like those who are not in us. Find out what you like and dislike. Anything that we like most we have in us. Like attracts like, but anything that we do not like is not in us at that time. It is latent or potential, but when that same thing will be aroused in us we will seek the company of such people. Therefore, it is said : a man is known by the company he keeps. Why? Because it is that which he likes; it is already in him; otherwise, he would not like it.

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It is the attraction of two things of a similar character.

Understanding is not consciousness. We may understand a thing, or misunderstand a thing, but consciousness of a thing is different. Illusion, delusion or hallucination is not the same as consciousness. This latter as such involves no question of validity or value. It has nothing to do with whether the object is correct, true, real or false. For instance, when you see a piece of rope in the dark, your consciousness is that you have seen something. It is your second perception, or apperception as they call it, that gives you a snake. That might be an illusion. But you are conscious of something, and when for some reason or other you project the idea of a snake which you had in your mind upon that something of which you are directly conscious, you make a mistake and get frightened. But your consciousness of that thing is that it is something there. You do not know whether it is a rope or a snake. You see something, which you take as in the form of a snake, but that sensation of form comes afterwards by association of ideas or actual touch. You do not get it through eyes. Eyes only give us the sensation of colour and extension or form of the colour.

Now another thing I will bring here that will be *à propos* of what I have already said, that is, that what we like is already in us. Now, how do we become conscious, how do we adjust ourselves in consciousness to so many objects which are outside

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of us as we believe? Is it possible that consciousness, which is immaterial, which is not the product of motion, produces motion? No; because motion only produces nothing but motion. Consciousness is not motion. Consciousness is that which gives us the knowledge of motion. Now, is it possible that we can adjust ourselves with so many varieties of objects that exist in the world if consciousness were immaterial and in no way related to the objects from the very beginning? That question rises in True psychology, but in physiological psychology you do not find that question raised at all, because they drop the whole subjects of consciousness, as I have already said, being only a function of the brain; being only conterminous with the activities of the brain cells.

Subject recognizes object because the subject is one with the object. Consciousness means recognition. We cannot recognize anything unless that thing is in some way within us. And whether it comes after or whether it has existed in us from the beginning is a question that will be answered afterwards. But we must admit, as I have said, that if we have no thief *in* us awake, we would not recognize the thief. To catch a thief set a thief. A thief can recognize a thief. But a saint would not recognize a thief, because he does not know what the character of a thief is. A saint would recognize a saint. A thief would recognize a thief.

That brings the illustration in my mind which will

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explain to you how we project our own thoughts and ideas. A man was lying in a state of Godconsciousness, or superconsciousness, on the roadside. It was early in the morning. He was in a trance-like condition, in superconscious state, and he was communing with God then. A thief was passing along the road and he looked at this man who was lying on the roadside. He thought that he too was a thief, and had been running as fast as he could to save his life. The thief was delighted in heart that the fellow was a thief and was exhausted and so lying on the roadside. He thought that the man would be caught by the policeman. So with that interpretation he ran as fast as he could.

There came a drunkard who was quite intoxicated. He looked at the fellow and said: "Oh, you have taken a peg more than I have taken, and you are in the gutter and I can walk." So he was delighted to know that he was better off than the other fellow.

A saint was passing that way, and this saint looked at the man and said: "He is in the Divine communion." He knelt down before him and began to kiss the dust of his feet and rub his feet gently. "What a great privilege it is that I have found a saint in a state of Godconsciousness," he said.

Now you see, these three men looked at the same object, the same man, and had three different conceptions. The thief projected his own thought and recognized the thief in the saint. The drunkard

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projected his thought and he supposed he saw a fellow like himself. And the saint recognized him because he understood what the man was.

So when you do not understand a thing, you must not blame the thing. You must not blame yourself either. Perhaps you have not got that thing in you; therefore you do not understand. Sometimes you criticize a person for his spirituality. You have a conception of spirituality that may not be the standard of the universe. It might be your own standard. You might think a man who is eating no meat as a strict vegetarian, is the most spiritual man. Another man might think that if that is the case, then a cow is the greatest spiritual creature in the world, because she eats nothing but vegetables and roots. Then again, if you consider that certain actions will determine the character of a spiritual man, you may find that those actions might not. A great saint will perhaps give us a shock and make us realize that our ideas or ideals are not the standard of spirituality. A man who can heal others will be regarded as a spiritual man, or a man who possesses good health will be regarded as a spiritual man. But you go among the savages; they are brutal; they enjoy perfect health, yet we do not call them spiritual. A man can heal, but he may be the worst hypocrite in the world. The healing power does not determine the spiritual quality. Because Christ healed, then everybody that heals is Christ—is a false logic. Christ might have healed, but there are other

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persons that heal who are not Christ. So they argue, because Christ healed and Mr. or Mrs. so-and-so heals, he or she must be a Christ. The healing power is not the standard of Christhood. There you are mistaken and if you argued correctly you would find the truth about it. If you see their life in other spheres, outside of healing, you will find there is no Christhood in them.

The individual man realizes, recognizes the objects of the universe, because these objects exist in the man or in the soul in some forms; or, perhaps in the form of ideas, like thoughts. Individual man is potentially universal, the whole in quality though not in actual quantity; otherwise, he could not adjust to all environments in consciousness. He could not recognize anything that is outside of himself. There is some touch of that everything in our own mind already from the very beginning. We have not received it from the outside. We could not receive it because anything we receive presupposes a predisposition in us to receive that thing; otherwise, it would be an impossibility. The fact that we are conscious of all objects proves that we have within us the potentiality of all objects. It is the most wonderful thing. It would bring a new system of psychology to the world in a new sense, not as an experimental psychology in a mechanical way, but True psychology.

Then there comes another theory or hypothesis, that every force when it remains in a potential state is

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asleep in the mind. And this force when it is in a kinetic or active state means that the mind is awake or conscious. Force itself is conscious, but when it is potential, the consciousness is potential. Force creates energy. Now it evolves, and now it involves; every evolution requires involution. The force that you give must be involved within you. It must react and go back into the centre. Every thought that you send out is a consumption of energy and it must come back in some form and react upon the centre whence it started. This is the law of action and reaction, the law of rhythm.

The whole universe is like a gigantic magnet, and the law of potentiality produces mind and matter from the same thing. There is one Substance in the universe which is neither mind nor matter. You will find that explained in one of my lectures on *Self-knowledge*.¹ But that potentiality, we must understand, that is, of mind and matter, of subject and object, comes from the same Substance. The one pole of the magnet is positive, which is mind; the other is negative, which is matter. The positive pole is the subject; the negative pole is the object; but they both exist in the same Substance. Therefore, where there is mind there is matter. This mind is the invisible side of matter and matter is the visible side of mind. This law of potentiality says that they are contrasted. What we can *posit* on the one pole we

1. Vide *Self-knowledge*, pp. 17-18.

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unity and variety, and it also explains the relation between monism and dualism. That is monism when we look at the neutral point of the magnet; we do not see the positive end and the negative end. But dualism would admit the positive end and the negative end and does not pay any attention to the neutral point. So, neither monism nor dualism is correct; they are only different standards as we interpret. Of course, there are different states of consciousness. By different states I here mean different planes. There are different names given, such as subconscious, conscious, superconscious, and Godconscious; but all these are different names of the one consciousness, which is known as Self-consciousness. Subconscious is larger than the ordinary conscious. It is a vast field, and in all our different experiences we find that this subconscious state is below the threshold and contains the germs or the powers infinitely greater than the mind which is working on the conscious plane. It is only the crest of the wave that we ordinarily call our present conscious state. In superconscious state we transcend the limitation of time and space and go beyond causality, and then we enter the realm of the Absolute, and for that reason it is called superconscious. That is, we are conscious of God in the higher plane, not indeed as anything of variety as *this* or *that* object, but we are conscious of the all-total unity. And, therefore, it is

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the greatest and the highest. It is also called God-consciousness.

There are normal and again abnormal states of consciousness. In abnormal states of consciousness, which we find in an insane person and a person with mental disease, they get the feelings in a different pitch of vibration from what we get in a normal state. There might be infinite gradations in the vibration of sensation. We only catch certain degrees of vibration, as I have already explained to you in the case of light. There might be ultra-violet rays which our ordinary eyes do not grasp, but in the case of clairvoyance the ultra-violet rays will be realized, will be perceived. In the case of insanity or any mental derangement, these minute shades of difference between the different notes that we cannot perceive will be realized; and perhaps that will make the individual appear as abnormal. Sometimes some sound will strike. That sound might be absolutely inaudible to us, because in our normal state our organ of hearing can catch so many vibrations in a second, say from forty thousand; but if there be a noise produced by the vibration of air say thirty in a second, our ears would not hear them; * but in an abnormal state, the organ of hearing might

*. "According to Helmholtz and others, vibrations under 16 or over 38,000 in a second are quite inaudible, though for most persons the range is much less, not exceeding 16,000."

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be quickened and the individual might hear a tremendous noise which is absolutely inaudible to us in our normal state. We might be frightened and say: "I am hearing that terrible noise." It might be there and we might not hear it. So, in the cases of diseased minds, the pathological conditions of an insane person are a great mystery to us if we follow the physiological psychology; but if we study True psychology, which is now recognized as the only thing that will explain all these phases in cases of abnormal mental diseases and disorders, it will explain these things. Otherwise, they remain an insoluble mystery. And True psychology tries to explain all these states, the difference between the normal and the abnormal, from the same hypothesis, that is, the hypothesis of the pulsation of the same substance which produces mind consciousness or subject at one end, and matter, or object, at the other.

"In musical tones, the vibrations are periodic, or succeed each other at regular intervals. Musical tones begin to be perceived at about 30 vibrations in a second, but a determinate musical pitch is not perceptible till about 40 vibrations are reached."

H. Helmholtz says: "The musical tones which can be used with advantage, and have already distinguishable pitch, have between 40 and 4,000 vibrations in a second, extending over seven octaves."

CHAPTER III

POWERS OF THE MIND

The subject for this chapter is *Powers of the Mind*. Man is the epitome of the universe, says the Vedânta. Whatever exists in the macrocosm exists also in the microcosm. All the forces that are manifested in nature are to be found also in the human body. The gigantic forces of nature, such as attraction, gravitation, electricity, heat, light, and various other kinds of motion are also to be found in the microcosmic world of the human body. These forces that are manifested in the human body, are not different in kind from those that we see in the external world, but they are the same, only the difference is in degree of manifestation. As on the physical plane, so it is on the mental plane. All the powers that are manifested by human beings are also to be found in the Universal mind. The Universal mind is the source of all the powers which have been shown by different individuals on the human plane. That Universal mind is also called the Cosmic mind. There is one eternal current of the Cosmic mind that is flowing from eternity to eternity. The individual minds are related to this Cosmic mind, as eddies and whirlpools are related to the current. This eternal current of Cosmic mind is flowing and producing

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eddies or whirlpools, which we call our own minds. These eddies are connected with other eddies through the Cosmic mind.

The waves of power that are manifested in different forms or psychic forces rise from the Cosmic mind, which is below our ordinary conscious plane. That is the subconscious mind. They rise up to our conscious plane from this unconscious or subconscious or subliminal self. Then we become conscious of them. Then afterwards they go down again to the subconscious realm. This subconscious realm is a vast realm, greater than our conscious plane. Our consciousness lies on the crest of these waves which are rising from the subconscious and going back to the subconscious. All the powers that rise in our conscious plane practically belong to the subconscious realm and they are unknown to us at present; but in time, under certain conditions and circumstances, they manifest themselves on the conscious plane. Then we know their existence.

Ordinarily a man or a woman exhibits certain powers, like the powers of thinking, the volition or will and reasoning and intellection. All these are common powers of the mind substance. We do not regard them as wonderful, however marvellous their origin may be; because we see them almost everywhere to a certain extent. We consider that it is a natural gift, a natural property of every human mortal. But whenever we find any expression in an

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extraordinary manner of the same powers, we look at them with awe and reverence. There our knees bend. We look at those as geniuses, as prodigies, because they manifest those powers of reasoning, intellection, and other talents which are uncommon and rare. There is a natural tendency in the human mind to appreciate that which is uncommon and rare. Do you not see how we value those things which are antique because they are rare? We put up the price of rare metals, and even of ancient postage stamps. That is the natural tendency. Anything that is rare or uncommon, and antique, either jewel or a gem or a furniture, we consider it as of great value because we do not find it at every place. For that reason these geniuses and prodigies are regarded as great, because they manifest those powers, which we too possess, perhaps, only in an extraordinary manner. They rise above the dead level of ordinary mortals, and the majority of people recognize them as gems, like diamonds in the coal mines. Nevertheless the diamonds are products of nature as are the coal deposits in which they may be found. Geniuses manifest these powers which they draw from the Cosmic mind.

But if we study the characters of these geniuses and prodigies, we find that they are prodigies under various conditions and they manifest different talents. There might be prodigies and geniuses in art, in music, in painting, and in other branches of knowledge and Artistic talents. What one genius will

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do another will not be able to do. For instance, what Mozart did Pascal could not do, and what Pascal did Mozart could not do. But both of them were geniuses. And again, what Mozart did perhaps another genius could not do. Zerah Colburn, under 8 years of age, was regarded as a machine in mathematical calculation, although untaught. What he did others cannot do. They are all prodigies and geniuses. So you will find that there is a difference in the expression of different powers among different geniuses and prodigies. As all these geniuses and prodigies manifest psychic powers at a certain degree of development, so there are other powers which are also recorded in human histories among all nations.

Take, for instance, the power of hypnotism. We all know how the mind of an operator in hypnotism would work upon the mind of the subject. The powers of suggestion is the most wonderful power. It depends upon the act of suggestion. In this act of suggestion the power is exerted by the words or thoughts that are sent or directed to the mind of the subject. I do not go into the details of this power of hypnotism because you are already familiar with them; only I will mention one instance that would perhaps give you an idea how this power works. Doctor Wiggs of Leyman in Europe, gave a suggestion to a girl, his subject after she was put into hypnotic sleep, that every Friday she would develop a red cross on her chest, and this would last three months, every Friday. The

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subject did not know anything about this suggestion, but she, true to the suggestion, developed that red cross on her chest on Friday. Every Friday for three months that red cross, a red blister, with congested blood, would appear in the form of a cross. Now think of the power of the suggestion over these minute cells of the body of the patient. That suggestion worked like a miracle upon the organic functions, the blood circulation, and the cellular activities of the body, the nerves, and the whole nervous system of the patient. That can be done.

You have heard of other instances of stigmata in the hands. Saint Francis D'Assisi had that, and there have been many instances of stigmata in the hands and feet of Catholic Saints, both of men and of women. Now by concentration of the mind upon those parts and holding the thought, one can produce those stigmata in one's own hands and feet. There is no spiritual power necessary. It is the power of the mind over the body. It is auto-suggestion, or self-hypnotism. One can put one's objective mind into sleep and then give a suggestion to one's subjective mind, and it will work like a miracle. So there have been all over the world such instances. You can produce a blister in any part of your body by your thought, and that will prove to you the power of the mind over the body, and the power of suggestion. So hypnotism is a name that has been given to that particular power of the mind which

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can be brought out from the subconscious of this 'subjective self' to the conscious plane. The real meaning of hypnotism is sleep. Hypnosis means sleep. So when we go to sleep at night, we hypnotize ourselves, only unconsciously, through habit. We give a suggestion, and the very position of the body makes us feel that we are going to sleep, and this is the time for us to go to bed, and that kind of suggestion we hold in our mind, and then we go to sleep. But in hypnosis, there is a volitional effort made, by either the individual himself or herself or by the operator, and there is an intention, a motive, and that is just a similar kind of sleep which can be produced by auto-suggestion. Of course, there are conditions under which that sleep of hypnosis can be brought about, with which you are familiar.

Like hypnotism, there is another power of the mind, which is known as telepathy or thought transference. Now telepathy or thought transference is another power of suggestion. That is, intelligence can be transmitted from one subjective mind to another subjective mind by the power of suggestion, and it is not only mere transmission of intelligence from one mind to another, but it has a different quality; and that is, the subjective mind of the one who is transmitting the message to the other mind will go down below the conscious plane of the other party and deliver the message and take all informations that can be gathered from the subjective mind of the patient and bring it back, and then bring up from below the threshold of

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the subjective self to the conscious plane of the operator. That is possible. One can get certain information from the person, who may not know anything about it, who may be asleep, and can bring that message to one's subjective mind, and then one can raise that before one's objective consciousness and be conscious of it. Such things can be done because the subjective mind or the soul of each one of us is omnipresent. It can go and reach the other mind irrespective of the distance or location. The external space relations do not exist in the realm of the subjective mind or the soul.

When you go to a clairvoyant or any psychic or fortune-teller, these mediums more or less go into their subjective state. That is, their objective mind goes to sleep as it were. The objective mind is put in abeyance and then their subjective mind begins to work, and they get all the informations from your subconscious self, and they bring that up to their conscious plane, and they tell you your future, what is going to happen, because it is all there in your subconscious mind. The impression of what was left there is also the foreshadow of what will be. They do not get it from any other spiritual being outside of the subjective mind. It is ordinarily believed that they have miraculous powers and spirit communication, and these spirits know everything and give the message. That is the popular belief. But in reality, scientifically, we know that it is not necessary to have the intervention of any spirit outside of our own

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selves. The powers of the subjective mind will produce those effects. So when anybody foretells anything about yourself, you know that that person has got the information from your subconscious mind, which has all that information. And it is there below the threshold of your consciousness.

Telepathy has been practised by different people for experimental purposes, and if you have any friend or relative, or any one whom you love, or a sweetheart, you can send your message to that person on the other side of the globe, and the person will receive that message telepathically, that is, if that person is ready to receive it. The transmitter and the receiver must be on the same plane and in the same phase of vibration. When the mind of the individual who is going to receive the message is positive or pre-occupied, then there might be a little difficulty, but in many cases in our ordinary daily life, the mother sends telepathic messages to her son or her daughter at a distance, and the daughter feels it. Anyone who is strongly attached to another through the power of love will receive such messages.

Thought reading is another phase of that telephathy. In telepathy we are feeling at a distance, that is the real meaning of telepathy. If your objective mind is subdued, and if you become a little passive, you will receive the thoughts of another person easily, and then if you are able to read those thoughts, those impressions that you receive, then you are reading the thoughts of another mind. It is very easy to

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develop that power. There is nothing extraordinary about it, except that it is not to be seen under ordinary circumstances. Some are born with this power well developed. Others have this power latent. But each one has the possibility of developing that power and manifesting its proper results.

Thought transference may be practised by anybody in his own home. You sit in your room and tell your friend or your relative to sit in another room at a certain hour, and both become passive, and hold the thought with intense desire to send the message, and direct that message to the subconscious mind of the other relative or friend who is sitting to receive it, and if the receiver be passive, then he will receive that message and it will be a proof to you.

Then there is another power like telepathy or thought transference, telekinesis; that is a wonderful power, the power of the mind by which heavy objects can be moved externally from one place to another. You have heard of cases of the table moving or being moved. There have been many instances which have been recorded in the annals of the Psychical Research Society, and many of these instances have been experienced by different individuals privately in their own lives, and there is no necessity of having any super-natural intervention for their explanation. It is the power of the mind. I remember at one time I was in Boston, and I was invited by a noted physician there, who was interested in this line of thought; so I dined with him, and after dinner we

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were seated in the parlour, and *à propos* of other things he said that he wanted to know my explanation of the power which he could manifest. I said: "What kind of power do you mean?" He said: "I can move a table, and I am not a spiritualist, nor a medium. I do not believe in spirit manifestation or spirit powers outside of ourselves." I became quite curious and said: "Could you do it in my presence? I should like to see it before I can give you any explanation." He said he could not tell whether he could do it at that moment, but he would try. So we went to his dining room, and there he had a dining table, with big heavy legs, massive legs, which four people could hardly move, a long oval table. So I sat at the head of the table and he sat next to me, and his wife sat in the room, not at the table, but she was knitting on a chair. We put our hands on the table, and we were chatting, and we were not thinking of the moving of the table; then after a while there were raps, and the table began to creak as if the bolts were going apart, and I was quite anxious to know what that was all about. I had never seen an occurrence like that, though I had heard and read about it. Then after a while the table began to move towards us, as if somebody was pushing that table; and we had to move backward, pushing our chairs backward. Then the table began to move with such a force that we were forced against the wall, and the table was pushing against us, and we had to stand up, keeping our hands on the table in the corner. The

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table moved straight. It was not going in a circle. Some people say they always move in a circle. But it came straight without making a curve. That was an experience which I had personally. And there were no fraudulent methods that were taken by anybody. There was no medium there, and it was in a kind of experiment by this man, who was thoroughly scientific. He asked me how could I explain that. I said : "It is the power that we all possess, the power of the mind which works through matter ; and the same power can be manifested in a spiritualistic seance or in a private home of any individual." You could develop that power in yourself.

You remember Palladino, the Italian medium. She possessed that power to an enormous degree. Of course, people believe, and perhaps she herself believes, that the spirit moves the table and moves those heavy objects, like a piano, and so on. But scientific researches have proved that it is the power of the mind, and it is called telekinesis.

If you read Dr. Meyers' *Human Personality* in two volumes, you find all such phenomena recorded, and the records were taken scientifically, under test conditions, as of positive facts.

Then there is another power which is known as clairvoyance or clairsaudience. These are also the powers of the mind. Clairvoyance is seeing at a distance, and that has been proved to be a scientific fact. There is a good record which has been kept of an extraordinary case of clairvoyance, and that was

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recorded by Emanuel Kant, the great German philosopher, in the case of Swedenborg. Swedenborg was a clairvoyant. In the book entitled *The Dreams Of A Spirit Seer* we find the case of Swedenborg. He could read the mind of the Queen of Sweden, and he communicated with her departed husband. And he was clairvoyant in an extraordinary degree, and it has been tested as a historical fact, and that fact is this :

On one Saturday in the afternoon in 1759 at about four o'clock, Swedenborg went from England to Gotenborg. There he was invited by one of his friends. After a couple of hours, Swedenborg was very agitated and disturbed in his mind. He went out and he looked around, and he came back to his friends and said : "There is a big fire there in Stockholm, a terrible fire; it is' destroying everything." Stockholm was fifty miles away from there. But he saw this big fire. He described exactly how the fire was started, and he said : "This terrible fire is destroying my friend's home," (he mentioned the name of his friend) "and it is coming to my home." His home in Sweden was in danger and he was very disturbed. Then he went forth outside, and about eight o'clock he went out and he said : "Now this fire has

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been extinguished. It has been brought under control and it has been stopped at the third door from my home." And that was a great relief to his mind. This created a great commotion among the people. This news was spread all over that town of Gotenborg. There was no telegraphic message at that time, so next morning, Sunday morning, the Governor summoned Swedenborg and asked him what he saw and how the fire was started and how it was stopped. The next day, on Monday evening, the messenger was sent from Stockholm by the Board of Trade with letters describing the cause of this fire and how it was stopped and how far it spread, and everything. That letter was delivered to the Governor on Monday evening, and it was exactly the same description as was given by Swedenborg at the time of that fire, fifty miles away from the city. And this is a recorded fact.

This will prove to you how the power of mind can see at a distance, without having any connection with the sense organs, without being dependent upon the organ of sight.

In case of clairaudience, it will be hearing at a distance without being dependent upon the organ of hearing. Now Joan of Arc had a wonderful power of clairaudience. She could hear at a long distance.

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She heard the voices, and it was she who heard that there was a sword behind the altar, and that made her go for the sword, and she found it was there, and that made the people believe that she was a witch possessed of demoniac spirits, evil powers, and she was condemned. But only a few years ago she had been canonized as a saint by the Catholic Church! And as if the people had forgotten the history of John of Arc, she was condemned, punished and burnt at the stake!

There is another power which is just as wonderful as the power of clairvoyance and clairsentience. It is called psychometry. That is the power of mind by which one can read the contents of a sealed letter and diagnose the conditions of a writer, of his home life and of his character. In this city such cases of psychometry have been exhibited. I went to see the other day a good psychometrist, John Slater. He was exhibiting this power. Give a letter into his hand, sealed at a distance, at your own home, and he will take up that letter and read the contents without opening the letter, right before your eyes. He never knew you, so he does not know any of the circumstances. Then he would tell the characteristics of the individual who wrote, and the conditions of his home, and almost his whole life. That is a kind of clairvoyance. It is very wonderful.

There was another case of a psychometrist, who picked up a piece of stone that was brought by one

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of the travellers from Europe, and it was taken from the Villa of Cicero, but this psychometrist did not know anything about the Villa of Cicero, but she described where the Villa was situated, and from what place the piece of stone was taken. She could see clearly in a vision. So this power is very, wonderful and can be developed by any individual. We do not need any spiritualistic theory to explain these facts. The spiritualists would believe that the spirit is showing all these wonderful things, but it is not the spirit of any disembodied individual, but it is the spirit of the psychometrist who has developed that power, manifested that power, because the soul of every individual is omnipotent. We possess all the powers.

In some persons these powers are developed; in others they are latent. Then the power of healing by suggestion and by various methods, as you know, is also the power of the mind. There are in India the Yogis who are known as psychics, and they have developed a great many wonderful powers. And there is a science about it, which explains the particular methods by which any individual could develop these powers; and that is called the science of Yoga. Raja Yoga is one of the best descriptions of this particular method of developing that power. There are psychic Yogis in India who can read the minds of others. Swami Vivekānanda met once a psychometrist in Madras; his answers were ready. So when you were

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writing the question, the psychometrist was giving the answer. He did not know your question. You were writing and he answered before you finished writing. If you gave him any sealed envelope, he would read it.

So this power can be developed by anyone, as I have already mentioned, and there are other powers which these psychic Yogis can manifest. In India they send messages by telepathy. Even at the time of the great political revolution in India, at the time of the Mutiny in 1857, when there were no telegraph wires, no other way of communicating at a distance except by letter-carriers, the messages of the movements of the soldiers were correctly sent at a great distance by the method of telepathy or thought transference; and what happened in one place was known to everybody through telepathy. These Yogis have also developed that power of communicating at a distance, and they do not make any claim about it as a wonderful power, but they take it as a matter of course, as a natural gift. Anybody ought to have it. Then there are Yogis who can foretell their time of death, exactly, to a minute, to a second. There was a Yogi in India. He invited his friends and all his relatives, and he said that he was going to pass out of the body in the presence of every one, not by committing suicide, but he sat in meditation and withdrew himself at the same hour and the same minute as he had predicted beforehand, because he

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could separate himself from the body. Those who have understood their own nature and the power of their own mind, can connect themselves with the brain at their will, whenever they desire, and disconnect. Just like taking off the switch of the electric light or telephone wire and connecting it again. It is possible. So in Râja Yoga it is described that a Yogi can connect with any brain, his own mind, and they sometimes use the body of a dead person. That is, when a person is dead, that person could be revived by another mind, by another soul. It is possible for those who understand that law.

Then there are other powers manifested by these Yogis in India, such as the power of disappearing in the midst of a crowd. People are standing all around and he disappears. That is a power that can be developed by concentrating upon the form of the body and withdrawing the luminosity of the body. That is a peculiar method, and the Yogis give a peculiar explanation for it, that when that luminosity of the body is withdrawn, nobody can see the person. They can make their bodies as light as a piece of cotton wool. They can pass through the air. It is not necessary for a spirit to carry the person through the wall. They claim it is the power of the mind by which this body could be brought under control; that is, de-materialize the body and rematerialize, but such instances are very rare.

Then they can make their bodies luminous, fiery, just like blazing fire under the skin. They can make

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their bodies like that. There are eight different powers (*Siddhi*) that are described, but these are all psychic powers, powers of the mind. They can make their bodies as small as an atom (*Animâ*), and they can make it as light as cotton (*Laghimâ*). Then under that condition one can walk over thorns and fire and over the surface of water, just as Jesus walked over the surface of water. And as Jesus did, there are other instances of the same kind. A follower and disciple of Buddha did that five hundred years before the birth of Christ. His name was Ānanda. He was crossing the *Śrâbasti* river to do some errands for the Master. When he returned it was quite late. The ferry boat had stopped, and he could not get any ferry; but he was very anxious to come to his Master, and he thought that he would try to swim across that muddy river with a tremendous current. To his great surprise he found he did not have to plunge into the water. He tried to plunge, but his body was so light, it went through the air without touching the water, and he was surprised at his own power. Then when he went to his Master Buddha, Buddha was surprised how he could come so late in the evening, when the ferry-boat service was stopped. Then he explained that by His grace he came across the water without touching the water. Buddha told him not to say anything to any other disciple about his power.

There was another instance of Padmapâda, a dis-

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ciple of Śankara who lived about six hundred years after Christ. His name was Padmapâda, that is, 'Lotus Feet.' He walked across the river as if he stepped on the lotus flowers, without touching the water; and, therefore, that name was given to him. So you see, the description of Christ's miraculous power of walking on the surface of the water is nothing new to a Yogi. They count that as one of the powers of the mind, and that can be developed by anyone who is advanced in the knowledge of psychic laws, who has gained control over this power. There are other powers. The power by which one can make his body heavy, heavier than a ton, so that no one can move the body. That is possible too. The power of commanding control over nature, stopping the rain, and other natural conditions. The Yogis have that power of creating a storm, controlling a storm, and bringing all the conditions under their control. That is another power, getting whatever they desire. If the Yogis hold a thought in their mind of getting something, the thing comes to them. By their power of attraction the thing appears towards them. Whatever they wish they get. Such are the powers of the mind, and these powers can be developed through steady practice. The best method is to go into a peaceful state in meditation. That is, that state of mind which you would have at the time of prayer, for instance, holding a desire, but at the same time your external sense powers are in abeyance, as if your objective mind is asleep.

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That state is called *Samádhi* in Vedânta. It is a superconscious state. Then these powers develop, but these powers are regarded as obstacles in the path of spiritual progress, because people get fascinated with these powers, and they do not try to get beyond them. For that reason, the great teachers, like Buddha and Christ and Ramakrishna, forbade their disciples to demonstrate such powers or to seek them either.

There is an instance, described in the lives of the disciples of Buddha. One of the disciples wanted to reach a begging bowl that was at a great height, and he thought that he would extend his arm and reach it without a ladder; and he reached it. How he reached it we do not know, but it is described that he extended his arm and he reached the thing. Seeing this, all the other disciples who were near by became so jealous that there was a great schism among the disciples of Buddha during his lifetime, and Buddha had to chastise that disciple who demonstrated that power. He said: "You must not do such a thing. It is a great obstacle in the path of spiritual progress."

I will give another illustration of another psychic who developed this power of walking across the river, over the surface of the water. There was a young man in India who wanted some psychic powers. And so he went to different places in search of a great Yogi, a great psychic who had control over the forces of nature, and he hunted everywhere. At

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last he went to the woods, and there he found a Yogi living in a cave, in the deep recesses of the forest. He was all alone, without any food or anything, and he was living in a cave unnoticed, so that no one would come to disturb him. And this young man found him and began to serve him and wait on him. And the Yogi, who was a great psychic, saw in this young man the possibility of developing some of his powers which were latent in him. So he took him as his disciple and kept him for a long time. For fourteen years this young man stayed with him and learned the various methods by which he could develop these different powers. And after fourteen years of hard practice and asceticism, one day he went to take a bath in the river, and he found that his body was lighter than water. He could float or walk across the river, and he was quite astonished. He wanted that power, and now he found it in himself. He came to his master and told him what he had experienced. The master was very pleased, and he sent him away to his home. So he came home and spoke to his elder brother about the wonderful power he had developed. His elder brother was very curious to find out what kind of power he had developed after fourteen years, and so he asked his younger brother to show it. His younger brother smiled on hearing and said: "Just come along with me. I will show you." So the younger brother went to the river, and to the great astonishment of the elder brother, who was a householder, his

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younger brother walked over the surface of the water, and crossed the river; and this was a very wide river too. The elder brother then took a ferry boat and met his brother on the other side. He could not walk across the river, so he had paid a penny to the boatman for crossing the river. And afterwards when he met his brother, his brother said: "Did you see my wonderful power?" He said: "How did you develop that power?" The younger brother said: "Oh, by hard practice, which lasted for fourteen long years." And he had to do so much asceticism and so much struggling, serving the master for so many years! The elder brother said: "I am very sorry for you that after fourteen years of hard asceticism and struggle you have developed a power which is worth a penny."

So you see, that is the way psychics are regarded in India by those who aspire for spiritual truths. Psychic powers are the powers of the mind. They are the source of greater bondage to us than our ordinary powers. Suppose that you had the power of thought-reading. What a terrible state of your mind it will be! If you come in a street car, you read the thoughts of everybody that is riding with you. Your mind would be in a hell if you realized the situation. Suppose you develop the power of clairvoyance, and whenever you try to sleep you see some things at a distance. There was a man who lived in Brooklyn. He came to me while I was in New York. He was a clairaudent, and he could hear at

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a distance the terrible noises, the shrieks and whistles of the steamers and railroad engines, and so he could not sleep at all. His mind was going crazy, and he said to me: "Now, Swâmi, can you help me?" He told me his condition: "I am going crazy. I cannot sleep. I cannot stop this. It is a terrible state of mind. I want to get out of it."

So you see, some people may develop this power without knowing how it will end and what result will come afterwards. For that reason it is better not to possess these powers. It is better for us to go straight to the centre of spiritual realization first. Then all these powers that are latent in the soul will come to pass, and we should not be in bondage; but we should remain like a master, and these powers will serve us as their master. That should be the ideal of all those who are struggling for the attainment of spiritual perfection even in this life. For that reason the highest teachings of Vedânta give us this ideal, that we do not gain anything by manifesting these powers.

There is another instance of a power that was developed by a psychic Yogi in India who became very famous. People used to come to him from all parts of the country and regard him as a wonder. He had the power to do anything. Whatever he wished he could do, and so he became very famous. There was a great sage. He was a spiritual master. He heard about him and his powers. So he came to him to awaken him from this state and to give him

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a higher conception of Truth. He came to him and asked him what wonderful powers he possessed. At that time a huge elephant was passing along the street, and he said: "There is an elephant. You say you can do anything that you wish. Could you kill that elephant?" The sage wanted to see whether he could do what he wished. The Yogi said: "Yes, that is possible." So he went out and took a little of the dust from the road and held it before him and threw it on the elephant. Instantly the elephant trumpeted and began to cry very loudly, and then he fell, rolled on the ground and died. The sage was outwardly marvelling at this sight and said: "What a wonderful power you have! Could you revive him?" The Yogi smiled and said: "Yes, that is possible." So he held another handful of dust and murmured some *Mantram* and he threw it on the dead elephant. The elephant then stood up on his legs and revived and began to walk. And the sage said: "What a marvelous power you possess! You can do what you wish. But one question I should like to ask you. You killed the elephant and made the elephant come back to life. What did you gain by it? Did you gain anything? You have manifested that power, but that power does not belong to you. It belongs to the Cosmic mind. But you have not realized the highest Truth by manifesting that power. You have not realized God nature. You have simply developed one of the psychic powers." With this the sage disappeared.

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That is the attitude which all the great spiritual teachers have taken towards these psychic powers. They do not deny the existence of these powers, but on the contrary, they say that all individual souls possess such individual powers, and that everyone could develop them sooner or later through certain practices, chiefly through concentration. Concentration is the secret key by which this subconscious mind can be opened. All these powers can be brought to the conscious plane by every individual, but the best way is to the highest first. "First seek ye the Kingdom of Heaven and everything else will be added unto you" afterwards. And that is what Christ meant by that instruction. It is not His original instruction, but it is the instruction of all the great Spiritual leaders of mankind who lived before Christ or after and who taught the same thing. You read the teachings of Krishna. Krishna manifested the same powers, like feeding the multitude with a handful of bread, a few morsels of food. Read his life and the descriptions as I have given in my book: *The Great Saviours of the World*.

These powers have been manifested by these great saints; but for us I should advise, as it has been advised by all the great teachers, that we should try to emancipate our minds from the bondage and slavery of the physical body and physical organs. Make ourselves free first and develop that power of knowledge and communion with the Supreme. Our individual soul is a part of the great Soul, which I have

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described as the Cosmic mind, and it possesses all the powers which are in the Cosmic mind. So if we first realize that Oneness and make ourselves the receptacles of the Divine powers, then we shall have no more trouble, no more worry, but we shall understand all the laws that govern our spiritual lives and the psychic powers, all the powers of the mind, which serve us as free souls and as their master.

CHAPTER IV

MIND AND ITS MODIFICATIONS

In this chapter our subject is *Mind and Its Modifications*. We have learnt that physiological psychology teaches that mind states, or the various modifications of the mind substance, are absolutely dependent upon the brain conditions. And these functions of the brain are described as the same as the states of consciousness, which are the modifications of the mind stuff. Modern behaviouristic psychology may be called a phase of the anatomy of the nervous system and of the cerebral hemispheres. After vivisectioning the brains of frogs, pigeons, sheep, and monkeys, and dissecting human brains, they have traced the grand terminus of the nerves in the grey matter, or the cortex of the brain, which is supposed to be the seat of the mind. All these nerves end in the grey matter of the brain. Every cell on our skin, for instance, has a minute nerve like a very fine thread, and that is connected with the main nerve centres of the spinal column, and they are all traced back to the grey matter of the brain. So when any sensation arises, it comes through these nerves, and by certain stimuli the nervous matter is agitated, and this agitation flows in the form of a current through the nerves until they reach the cortical cells of the brain.

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Sensations or the vibrations of the external objects which come through the nerves are nothing but suggestions, and these suggestions are carried by these nerves to the brain. But the hemispheres of the brain act from considerations, that is, expectations of sensations which will be felt in one way or another. There are lower centres in the brain which act from present sensational stimuli alone. The lower centres receive these sensations or vibrations of the nerve currents, but the hemispheres, or the grey matter, the top, has a different function. It is psychological, it is not so much of physiological conditions. These hemispheres are regarded as the seats of emotions, instincts and intelligence which do not exist in animals without hemispheres of the brain. They have made vivisections, they have cut out the hemispheres of the brain of pigeons and frogs and sheep and monkeys. All the activities of the body and senses would continue when the hemispheres were gone, but there would be no emotion, no feeling, no instinct. A pigeon, after the hemispheres were removed, would go on moving and eating, but it would not have any feeling. If its mate appears, it would not have any feeling. Then if it sees another pigeon, it would not be able to discriminate it from a stone or any other object. It would have no feeling or discrimination. If there be any cause of fear or danger, it would have no fear. Because fear is an emotion. It would not be able to take any precaution to protect itself for self-preservation. Those are the activities or func-

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tions which are located in the hemispheres of the brain. These pigeons and animals without the hemispheres would live the life, but it would be an absolutely impersonal life. So if the hemispheres of our brain are taken out, then we would live the life, but no personality will be manifested. We will live like machines waking and sleeping, in a kind of impersonal way. That is the conclusion which the modern psychologists have arrived at through the study of the brain and its functions.

They also say that the hemispheres of the brain, the cortical cells, are also the chief seat of memory; so when the hemispheres of the brain of a pigeon are taken out, the pigeon would have no memory. But it would go on living, because there are other centres which through the muscular actions of the legs and of the heart and of the lungs will continue to work. It would have no consciousness, as it were.

Modern psychologists try to explain everything by automatic reflex actions of the brain. A reflex action, we must understand how it works. We have experienced that when a mosquito sits on your cheek, suddenly your hand will go to that spot, and you will slap your cheek to remove the insect. Now what has happened here? The afferent nerves that are connected with the cells of the skin would carry the sensation of a bite to the brain. Then there would be some kind of current or communication that will go through the brain, and that will produce a kind of image in the conscious entity, and that image will

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be a kind of feeling of bite or pain or sting, and immediately the message to remove that cause of pain will be sent out of the brain through the other set of nerves, which are called motor nerves, the efferent nerves. Those nerves come out from the brain to the muscles of the arms and of the different parts of the body. So, instantaneously, as it were, without any volition on the part of the individual, the hand will move and the muscles will work and strike on the spot where the mosquito is biting. Now that is reflex action.

So all the activities of our bodies and all the organic functions are described as the result of the reflex actions. When you hear the whistle of a train, or when the conductor says: "All aboard," now that sound will enter your ears and will produce an impression, and that impression will be translated into a kind of feeling, and immediately the mind will react, and through the reflex activities you will be running to catch the train. That is reflex action. The legs will run. So you can understand that whenever suggestion comes like that, all that follows is the reflex action of the brain or of the mind. And that is, according to modern psychologists, automatic. They do not consider that there is any consciousness or any intelligence in that action, but it is mechanical. But whether it is really mechanical or not, that is a point, and they come to the conclusion that they are mechanical, but in reality they are not mechanical; they are conducted and governed by

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intelligence. According to the theory of automatism we learn that, given the environmental conditions of Shakespeare, and assuming that we know his nervous system, we can tell exactly what each and every step in the writing of a play like *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* will be; we can tell too, automatically, how he wrote, how he made even a mistake in writing and scratched off a word. That was all automatic action, according to modern psychologists. That far you can learn; but it would be very foolish to accept such a theory, in order to explain all the actions of the mind which are governed by intelligence. But the modern psychologists tried to explain it in that way. It is just like a machine working. You touch a button and the whole thing moves in this way, just as in an automobile; in an automobile you touch the button and the electric starter works, and then the machine moves; and that is a kind of automatic action. And when they see anything mechanical in any part of the human mechanism, they mean like that. It is the theory of automatism which has been accepted by physiological psychologists to explain these things, and that is what you learn in schools and colleges; the analytical psychology, and even James's psychology in the main,¹ is like that. It is all automatic like a machine. The human body is like a machine. The analytic school of psychology teaches that the sensations and

1. Cf. W. James's explanation of 'habit,' 'emotion,' etc.

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ideas of sensations and all motor activities are in turn the elements out of which the mind is built. The mind is the sum total of these sensations, according to modern psychologists.

By sensations we mean those suggestions that come through the eyes, through the ears, through the other organs. And those suggestions are not in the states of consciousness at first. They are merely molecular changes, *i.e.* changes of the molecules and the atoms of the nervous system and of the brain.

And then come the ideas of sensation. Those are called apperceptions in modern psychology, or perceptions, or conceptions. They come afterwards. At the root they are nothing but motions. The 'ideas' of motion are the elements out of which the mind substance is built. I have already described the afferent and efferent or the sensory and motor nerves. Now these currents, according to modern science, pour into the brain by the afferent nerves, that is, those sensory nerves that are scattered under the surface of the body, and they carry the sensations. The currents or stimuli strike. If you press any spot on the skin, that pressure would be the cause of a stimulus, and that stimulus will be a kind of suggestion, and that will create a current in the nerves, and that current will pour into the brain, and in reaction the brain will send another current. That current which pours into the brain will disturb the arrangements existing there. These brain cells are connected by fibres, and these fine fibres have a

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passage through which the nerve current flows, and they are all connected. Each in turn excites others. Now if the sensation comes in one corner of the brain, it would be connected with other corners or other cells in some way; but they cannot exactly tell how they are connected and how the association of ideas takes place. They try to explain by the automatic or mechanical theory, but they cannot describe perfectly, because they do not know what is happening in the brain of a living man. Then these currents will explode, as it were, in the brain, and a discharge of downward nerve current will begin and will reach the muscles, and the whole process is done automatically. That will be reflex action. They say that when these currents will carry these minute atoms of the cells into the brain, they will produce a kind of electrical explosion, and in that explosion there will come what we call consciousness, and then it will begin to react and send another discharge of electrical or nervous current, which will reach the muscles automatically. This theory has been held so long as the only solution of our mental actions from the physiological and anatomic stand-points, but there has come a question which upsets this whole theory, and that question is the question about *Aphasia*.

Aphasia is a kind of disease. It is not paralysis of the organ of voice or tongue or lips. It is a disease which produces a loss of speech. A man who has this motor *Aphasia* has lost the power of speech. He

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might use a few words but he has not any conception of the meaning of those words; but in most cases he cannot use words, that is, articulate sounds with a meaning, as you would say. Now that is a disease which has upset all the mechanical theory of modern psychology. Why? Because Broaca located the speech centre in the brain, and this speech centre is located on the right side of the hemisphere of a man who uses his left hand, who is a left-handed man; and it is located in the left hemisphere of the brain of a man who uses his right hand, or a right-handed man. Now when this disease attacks that centre in the brain, the individual loses the power of speech. Suppose a man who is right-handed has got a stroke of paralysis and has lost the power of speech, that is, *Aphasia* has attacked him. Now such cases have been recorded in medical journals and medical statistics. Now if that same individual would be trained to use his left hand, he would create a new centre of speech on the other side of the brain, just the opposite, by his will-power, by his thought force. And then he will regain his power of speech. Now, how can the theory of automatism explain such cases? The theory of automatism cannot explain such cases, as also other cases. There has been recorded the instance of a man who lived for years, and one half of his brain was dried up, dead, and he did all his works with the other half of the brain and without showing any symptom of change. After death the post mortem examination proved that he

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had only one half of a brain.

There is a book on this subject which is very interesting. You may read that book by Dr. Thomson entitled *Brain and Personality*, and he has kept all these records. He is the great consulting physician and surgeon in the Roosevelt Hospital in New York City. He came to my lectures many times. He is an old man now. He has kept these statistics. He has proved that the brain does not produce personality, but personality uses the brain as an instrument. He calls this personality the soul. The soul and the mind both work on the brain, and if one centre is destroyed, or one portion of the brain is destroyed, it can manufacture another portion of the brain and make it perform the functions of the dead portion. Now that is a fact which has upset the theory of automatism of the modern psychologists. The theory of automatism cannot explain the cause of emotion, instinct, will, desire and intuition. What is an emotion? Who feels? Does the brain feel? No, the brain does not feel. We feel; the individual, the personality feels, feels certain conditions, such as joy, grief, love, hatred, anger, fear and pride. All these are emotions. Now these emotions are left as states of mind or modifications of the mind stuff; but how they are produced the modern psychologists do not explain at all. They do not know. They say it must be some kind of reaction or reflex action of the sensations which come through the nerve currents, and they complete the circuit through the loop of

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the cortex of the brain, and produce these changes that any emotion will produce in the body. Of course, emotions have physical expressions. The physical body is affected by any emotion. Now, when you have anger, you see the eyes red, and the face flushed, and the whole system will be vibrating with rage, and the circulation will be increased, the temperature of the body will be higher. Now again, another emotion, like hatred, would produce a kind of poison in the system. Jealousy will produce a kind of poison in the system, and that is a very deadly poison. A mother who suckles her baby while she is in a rage of anger, hatred or jealousy, is nursing the baby with poison. She might not know it, but it will produce the effect in the system of the child. That has been experimented upon and recorded as a fact. Fear again will produce a wonderful change. When you see anything that will cause fear of death or fear of injury in your mind, your heart will begin to palpitate, your breath will be quick and short, and sometimes perhaps the breath will stop. In your nervousness you will lose your sense of right and wrong. You will begin to scream perhaps, and cry, shed tears. All these things are the expressions of an emotion, as if a cyclone has blown upon the brain cells and has upset the whole thing. Now what causes that? Modern science cannot explain.

Instinct cannot be explained by modern psychologists. How instinct is caused the theory of

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automatism does not explain. Instinct is defined as the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends without foresight of the ends. As emotion is a feeling,¹ so instinct is a faculty of acting, —acting without knowing what result will come. Of course, modern science says that this instinct has nothing to do with memory and experience, but that is a mistake. Instinct they describe as a complex nervous impulse, or an organised sense impulse.

Desire or wish or will is another modification. How desire will arise they cannot explain by the theory of automatism. We cannot define what desire is, but we can say that we desire *something*, we wish for *something*, and we will to do *something*. These three words we use with three different meanings. We generally use the term desire for such things as will give us pleasure or will produce agreeable feelings; and we wish a thing the attainment of which is rather uncertain. We are not quite sure whether we will get that thing, so we wish for it.

1. "Feelings are broadly classified into *sense-feelings* and *emotions*. *Sense-feeling* is agreeableness or disagreeableness attaching to a sensation, and hence is presentative in nature. * * Emotions, on the other hand, are feelings directly associated with ideas, at least in most cases." MacDougall says that feeling and emotion the two words are used almost interchangeably. The famous Lange-James theory of emotions also asserts that the 'emotions' are essentially of the same nature as 'sensations,' i.e. feelings.

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And will is connected with physical movement. I will to move my hand. So, in these three senses these terms are used. But according to modern psychology we do not know why desire arises, why we wish for a thing, why should everyone wish for an agreeable sensation? What for? What do we gain by it? The utilitarian theory does not explain. It might increase the lifetime or it might help in gaining more knowledge or something of value. The mechanical theory is not clear about it.

Now we have learned what the physiological psychology tells us about the mental states or modifications, and we are all in the dark. We do not know where we stand. We have not learned anything. They have described a machine, but one thing that governs the machine or rules the machine is left in the darkness and in the background; so we cannot tell anything about it. But True psychology teaches something different. It tells us that desire is at the root of our conscious life. Desire is at the bottom. And that desire is a creative power in the individual soul. It is the desire that produce the suitable instrument or organ for the fulfilment of itself. That is, we would not have eyes if we did not have at the begining the desire to see. We would not have any ears, and all the fine nerves that are connected with our organ of hearing would be impossible if there were no desire to hear at the bottom. If there were no desire to eat, there would be no teeth, no alimentary canal, no digestive organs. So desire is at

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the root of everything. The desire to see has brought the eye; the desire to hear has created the ear; the desire to eat has produced the teeth, the alimentary canal, and the digestive organs. Modern psychologists put the cart before the horse, and True psychology traces the origin of these instruments to the proper cause. Who has created the brain? If there were no mind in the primitive cell of the protoplasm, if there were no intelligence, the creation of the brain would be impossible; and if there were no desire at the root, the most complicated instrument of the brain would not come into existence. Desire is the creative effort of the mind, and that desire is at the bottom of all other functions. It is called in Sanskrit *Vâsanâ*, that is, the first impulse that is in the living substance or living soul.

We read that before the beginning of evolution there was one Cosmic mind in a latent state, and at that time it had no desire. Then it had the first desire awakened, and at that time it realized that it was alone, and it wanted to be many, to be conscious of itself, and then came the differentiation between the ego and non-ego, between the spirit and matter, the subject and object. So consider very deeply what is at the root of your whole conscious life? Why are you doing all these things that you are doing today, if you did not have the desire for something? It is the desire that guides you, and that desire has various expressions, which you may call by different

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names; but the motive power, the creative force, that is in you, is in the form of desire.

Will is another name for it. Will cannot be separated from desire but desire is a better expression than will. Will is force that operates externally. Desire is the positive pole of all mental actions and it always has connection with pleasure. We do not desire anything that gives pain. The opposite or negative pole is aversion or pain, which we hate, which we do not like. We try to get away from it. Desire leads to that thing which produces a pleasant sensation, which is agreeable; and aversion to these things which are just the opposite. So desire and aversion are like two opposite poles of the same mental state. Desire is the father of all causes. All other causes of any action, that we can think of are produced by desire. But when the desire is absolutely gratified or fulfilled, it is killed. There is no more desire. The death of the desire comes at fulfilment, or its perfect gratification. If all desires are killed we would not live on this plane at all. We shall be dead. There will be no incentive for life. A life without desire may be a kind of mechanical life, automatic life, of a stone perhaps, which has no desire expressed; but it lives; it has life. The fulfilment of desire again, is dependent upon the amount of energy available for this purpose. Energy is attracted by desire. Now all desires are not fulfilled of less course, not even gratified to our expectation, because we have not had sufficient

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energy under our control which we could use for that purpose. First of all, when we want to fulfil a desire, we must have a storage of energy, and when the energy is there then rises desire, and attracts that energy towards a certain direction, and then the result comes. And if the energy is not sufficient to reach the climax, then the desire is baffled, is unfulfilled. It is a failure. So success and failure would depend upon the amount of energy that we possess. Even in mental activity we require energy. You must not think that energy is only physical, for when you spend your time in thinking you spend more energy than you would spend in lifting a heavy weight. Mental activity uses up energy more quickly because it is the finer kind of work or the finest kind of motion or activity. Lifting a heavy weight or doing any manual labour, of course, would require physical energy ; but thousands of times stronger and greater quantity of the same energy would be necessary to do deep intellectual work. People do not realize that.

Now a great artist will produce his masterpiece, and after he has produced his masterpiece he cannot produce anything better. There his desire is killed. A musician who has produced the ideal music, there he has finished. His mission in life is finished. So in these cases of great geniuses in every department of mental or intellectual life, you will notice that when they have reached the climax they have finished their mission. Take, for instance, Christ or Buddha. Their

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life is short. They reach the climax, and then they go down. They have no more energy to give anything new so they are finished; and that is to be found in every line of geniuses and prodigies.

Of course, desire works in every field. When you sow a seed, the seed gathers the energy to produce the tree from the environment, and that energy is manifested, and as soon as it is exhausted the tree will be dead. That will explain why some individuals die within a few years in their childhood and youth: because at the time of their birth they have not the power in the soul to gather enough of energy—energy that is necessary to continue the life to its normal span. These souls have not learned the method by which they can replenish the storage. It is just like a storage battery, that is, when the electricity is exhausted, the machine stops. That will give you an idea of how much energy you have to gather in order to spend. You are spending it, and you can gather so much, you can draw so much from the atmosphere, from your surroundings. There is a limit in each individual. You cannot draw as much as I would, because your machine, your whole thought life is different. But of course, you can improve, and you will be able to do perhaps more than I can do if you put your desire in that line. But at present, while you are living, like a machine, on this earth, doing these routine works in all your daily life, you will feel ex-

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hausted, and you will soon die, and die before accomplishing much. But if you know how to store more energy, you will be able to spend more and do greater work. But the root of all these is *desire*. A man who has a strong desire to live, perhaps will draw from all sources this energy and direct it towards one end. He will get the gratification of that desire; then he will die. If the desire is gratified, the death is sure to come.

Everything has its polarity. In the material world we see nothing but motion; but this motion is external in the material world; and when it is in the internal plane or mental plane, the same motion would appear as emotion. It would be a subjective expression. That is the polarism. Every motion will have its opposite polarized effect in the expression of the emotion, in the form of the activity of the physical body and sense organs. Intensity of action forces reaction. If any emotion be very intense, then there would come into operation another law, the law of action and reaction; and that emotion would bring its result in the reaction. When love is intense it will turn into hatred, or into worry or anxiety. If you love anything most, the greater you love, the more anxious you are. That is, you are sowing the seed of pain. There is suffering. So love, until it reaches a certain point, will be very agreeable, but as soon as it goes beyond that point, it will begin to produce pain and suffering in the form of anxiety, worry and hatred. Love will turn to hatred, not for the same individual,

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but for others who are trying to take away your love. It will produce a fear of losing. Love is nothing but attachment, a strong desire to keep something that produces an agreeable feeling. It is nothing else. It is the expression of desire, and that strong attachment, or clinging to life, is another expression of our mental life. That is, we do not want to lose it while it is agreeable. That is the nature of desire.

By pleasure we mean agreeable feeling which we desire to continue. Anything desired is pleasure. Analyze your love, whatever you love, whether you love to eat or drink or dress. If you have nice jewelry which you love, you might have some cause for holding on to it, for showing the gratification of some kind of desire; you want to show to others that you are rich, that you possess something that they do not possess. Analyze your feeling and you will find that there is something like this there. When you dress smartly you try to beat upon your fellows in dress. When you have succeeded, you cling to it, you hold on to it; and that is attachment; that is love for your dress. Then it becomes attachment, and then you are afraid of losing or spoiling it.

It reminds me of what my Master, Srî Râmakrishna did. Somebody gave him a very expensive and beautiful Kâshmere shawl to put on. Immediately the thought came to his mind: "Oh, I must not sit there. It might be spoiled. It might get dirty. I must not go near any oil or anything;

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it will get a spot." He said: "It is a source of bondage," and he threw it in the rubbish. He threw it away because there he noticed how his mind was getting into attachment. Everytime we like a thing very strongly we are sowing the seed of attachment. But then why should we not have attachment? Because it will end in suffering. As soon as it would come to a climax, it will produce pain; and if you want to avoid pain which you foresee as coming, you get rid of your attachment. Then you are free. In everything in life you will see that it is so. So this love and hatred come from the same cause. The same cause will produce an agreeable feeling up to a certain pitch; then it will become disagreeable. Experimental psychology has proved that.

Hold an electric needle on the skin and give a certain vibration. At first it is a kind of indifferent feeling; then a point will come and you will begin to like it. If it is increased a little more it will give you pain, and then you will dislike it and want to get away from it. The same vibration which is more intense than what you like would produce pain, a disagreeable feeling. Eat something; you like it. Eat it again, continuously; you hate it. You will hear music, beautiful music, which you like; it would be fine, first-class. Hear it continuously hour after hour, for two days; do nothing else; you would not go near it. Why is that? For the same reason a thing is agreeable to a certain point, but when it reaches beyond that point it pro-

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duces pain. That is the reaction. Reaction will produce just the opposite feeling. Courage will instantly turn into fear. A man who is very courageous on the battle field, fighting with intense bravery, suddenly runs as fast as he can to get away from the battle field. Because bravery will rise to a certain point, and then it will take an opposite turn and react upon the individual, and this opposite pole would be fear. So pleasure and pain would arise from the same thing; love and hatred, courage and fear would arise from the same thing. They are the opposite poles, just like life and death. Life of a desire, as I have already described, continues so long as it is not gratified; but when it is intense and is gratified, the fulfilment brings its death.

Take it in your whole lifetime. You are living for a certain purpose, and you are born with a certain amount of energy which you wish to spend, and as soon as you have spent that energy, you have the desire to get away from it. You have finished.

I will give you another illustration of a man who spends his energy to become rich. A man wants money. He has a certain amount of energy and he gathers all the energy he can and spends it towards accumulating wealth. He tries to be a millionaire. He gets all his money, by fair means or foul, by cheating and robbing. He wants to be rich. That is his one aim, and he cares not whether his health is gone, or even whether his wife and children are starving; he must be rich. He spends every small

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particle of energy that he has towards accumulating wealth. He succeeds. His desire is gratified. Then comes another desire in the form of a nice home, nice companions, social life. He is not satisfied with his own life. He must have social companionship, social life. He must have another position. He must climb the ladder. Then he spends more energy. Then he gets a position in society, and afterwards he has spent all his energy and has ruined his health. His position does not amount to anything; he is a sick man. Every dollar that he saved is now going to be spent to save his health. So he is going in another direction. The bank account is getting very small, and he cannot get back his health because he has lost his fund of energy and sacrificed his health for money which does not bring any more pleasure to him. Do you not see this condition right around yourselves? Such things are happening every day, but we do not pay any attention. It is true, and the same thing that he thought would make him so happy, has turned out to be a source of great pain. His wealth does not amount to anything. At first he liked wealth to have some ease in life, to live a luxurious life, and get everything at his command, and when everything is at his command he cannot enjoy it. It is a source of agony to him.

For that reason a true philosopher will say: "Why do you waste all this energy for that which will never bring real happiness to your soul, to end in pain or unhappiness?" Therefore, we should learn to dis-

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criminate. Discrimination is another faculty which is extremely desirable.

Now I have described to you all the different modifications of the mind which have not been described clearly by the modern psychologists. And the last thing is intuition. Intuition is another modification of the power of the mind. It is a direct perception. The word is derived from the verb *to intuit*, which means to look upon. Intuition is never doubtful nor undecided. We cannot argue it. It is a direct sensing of something by subject.¹ Instinct and intuition are two names of the same faculty. It is instinct in lower animals, and it is called intuition in human beings. It is connected with memory and past experience; so if we do not have any memory of the experiences that we have gathered, we cannot have instinct. Every instinct is the result of a habit or of repeated previous experi-

1. Intuition (*Anschauung*), according to Kant also "is knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) which is in immediate relation to objects (*sich auf Gegenstände unmittelbar bezieht*)," says Prof. Kemp Smith. So it is quite explicit that Kant means to say: "*Intuition is the immediate apprehension of a content which as given is due to the action of an independently real object upon the mind.*"—Vide A Commentary to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp. 79-80.

Kant says himself in his *Prolegomena* regarding intuition "that everything which can be given to our senses (to the external sense in space, the internal in time) is intuited by us as it appears to us, not as it is in itself." (p. 37).

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ences. Just as we begin to ride a bicycle, at first we use all the muscles with conscious effort and train our muscles. Then afterwards these muscles will move automatically, and so that automatic activity may be called instinctive. But every instinct presupposes conscious efforts and something akin to *pre-established harmony*. And intuition is that power by which our subjective mind can perceive the result without reasoning, without questioning. It sees the thing as if pictured before its mind, and if you intuitively know anything and if anyone asks you the reason, you would say 'because.' That is a woman's because. That means *because* she knows it. There is no reason. There is no reasoning in intuition. It is the negative of reasoning, but it is the source of knowledge, and this knowledge is bound to come; and whenever we get an understanding by the positive method, that is the action of the intellect. Intellect is one of the powers of the mind, but intuition is just the other pole of reason, that is, knowing without conscious reasoning. And these are the powers that produce the various modifications of the mind. Our mind substance is like finer matter in vibration, which is thrown into different *Vrittees* or whirlpools or eddies by these stimuli, the sensations from the external world. And they are all known and governed by the intelligent soul, which is our subjective self or our being. And this subjective self or being possesses this instrument of mind, one half of which is subjective, which contains

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all the emotion, will, desire and intuition. The other half is the objective mind, which is closely in touch with the brain, and the nervous system. It receives all the impressions, and presents them to the soul, and then the soul discriminates through the subjective mind, or that part of the mind which cannot be described by any other term, which is internal and which possesses all these powers. And this mind and its modifications are all governed by different laws, the law of rhythm, the law of polarity, the law of action and reaction, and the law of cause and effect. They govern our subjective conditions. But the soul is the Ruler of all.

CHAPTER V

POWER OF CONCENTRATION

When we study the physiological psychology, we do not read anything about concentration. It is considered that concentration is a part of what we call attention. Of course, concentration in its simplest form is known as attention, but modern physiological psychology does not explain what attention is. It simply describes it as a faculty of the mind. It is a mysterious power. Why is it that all these sensations which are pouring into our brain through the different powers of senses, why is it that we do not perceive them all? That is a great mystery. To say that it is one of the faculties of the mind is to narrow the field of consciousness. We may receive various kinds of vibrations, of sound, of light, and other vibrations which are known as sensations, but we do not pay attention to all that we receive. The focal field of consciousness is very narrow, and the reason why this is so is not given in modern psychology. But if on the contrary, we consider that the mind is not a function of the brain, but is something distinct from the brain, as true science teaches, then we understand how the soul, whose power is manifested in the form of mental functions and in the form of mind and intellect, which, in their turn, are in some mysterious

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way connected with our brain, has the power to control the various energies, the various kinds of functions which are nothing but the results or expressions of the mental energy; and that power of control is not to be found in the brain. The brain does not control the various functions, sensations, thoughts and ideas that constantly rise in the form of vibrations of the brain cells. Brain is unintelligent. Intelligence is not produced by the activity of the brain, and there lies the greatest difficulty that modern scientists or physiological psychologists have encountered. They consider that the brain, which is unintelligent by itself, can produce intelligence. But that does not seem to be logical.

On the contrary, it seems to be absurd, when we know that intelligence is not something that can be produced out of unintelligent substance. That difficulty is never removed in modern psychology, but in True psychology that difficulty does not arise. because we consider that intelligence is not produced by unintelligent substance, but that it is always distinct from the motion of material particles. Motion produces nothing but motion, but intelligence is not a motion. It is something that knows the existence of motion. It is the interpreter of the motion. So even if the vibrations of the molecules of the cells of the brain be the sole explanation for all sensations and feelings, then those vibrations must be in some way translated by some intelligent entity into a mental state, a state of consciousness, and then that

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state would be no longer a part of the brain, but it will be in the field of the mind substance. The mind substance is finer matter in vibration. That finer matter may be like our electrons. When we speak of finer matter we refer by way of illustration to the finer particles of those corpuscles or electrons which are finer than atoms. And these electrons are in a constant state of vibration just as if they are in a whirlpool; and some are revolving around a common centre. The centre is the positive pole, and these fine particles of electrons or corpuscles are revolving around the central sun, in some cases, myriads and myriads of them. Consequently, that produces a kind of motion; and that field of vibration may be the medium through which the soul works upon gross matter. But that energy is the energy of the mind. So the mind substance may be called the finer matter or finer particles of atoms which are in constant motion.

Concentration means the control of this energy of the whole mind substance, by the will-power, and the method by which this flood of energy can be, directed toward one object. Ordinarily our mental rays are scattered in all directions. It may be called dispersed attention. Our mental energy is dissipated, scattered, and this scattered state of mind does not produce any result, but if the attention be fixed upon one object, then we can know the true nature of that object. Without fixing our attention to one particular object, we cannot know the various

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phases, the various conditions, the various workings of that particular object. For that reason, concentrated attention is the most important thing to have, and without concentrated attention we cannot gain any success in any line. For that reason, it is said by Ralph Waldo Emerson that the one prudence in life is concentration and the one evil is dissipation. In concentration consists the secret of strength and success, in politics, in war, in business, and in all the avocations of our daily life. Without exercising this power of concentrated attention we cannot make any headway in any line of work or study, or even in business, or in the professional lines. In order to have success we must have a definite object in view and our mind should be fixed upon that object so strongly that we shall be able to see all the minute details that are connected with that object, and if there be any obstacle in the path of acquiring the ideal which we are striving to obtain, we should find what those obstacles are, and those obstacles must be removed; and so long as they are not removed, success is not near at hand. So we may say that concentration is the means by which we can get hold of the necessary ideas and different conditions under which success can be achieved. A man who has not the power of concentrating his attention upon the object or the ideal of his business or in any other particular line, cannot gain any amount of success in that line. Think of the man who, for instance, is studying the movements of the stars and the planets,

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and imagine the wonderful concentration that is necessary to watch the movements of these planetary bodies, heavenly luminaries. Day after day, night after night, he would be watching the movements and studying and calculating and computing the mathematical problems, and the result would be his wonderful discoveries. He is the best astronomer who has been able to devote all his attention to that study.

Think of the wonderful concentration of a man who is studying the various conditions connected with the micro-organism under a powerful microscope, studying for days and nights in the laboratory, watching the movements of the animalcule; and studying everything carefully. And the result of this study is the discovery of the various relations that pertain to the different germs and causes of disease and our health and our physical conditions.

All discoveries in science are due to concentration; so also in arts, in mathematics, in poetry, in painting, in music. In every line of thought and study, you will find that the power of concentration is absolutely necessary; and this power of concentration is ordinarily known as *attention*. That attention is involuntary at first. It is not an acquired habit but it is natural. It is a substantial gift of nature, we may say. We find this attention manifested in a child. That is, at first after a few days after the birth of the child, the child fixes its attention upon any bright object or upon the face of its mother, or

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upon the eyes of the nurse. That is the beginning of attention and that attention is involuntary. The child does not exercise the volition or the will-power, because its will-power is not yet developed; but at the same time the expression of the power of attention is to be found in that child.

Also in the lower animal plane we find that the power of attention is manifested by different animals. For instance, in tigers, in cats, in birds, and in almost all animals which depend for their living upon other animals as their prey; and when they are trying to catch their prey they will have to fix their attention. Think of an eagle soaring high in the sky. His eye is fixed upon an object on this earth, and he swoops down with a fixed attention and catches the object of prey; and that is the way he can sustain himself. Now, when a cat catches a mouse, you could notice how its eyes would be fixed and its whole motion of the body would be arrested, and it would be all alert; and believe me it has a hypnotic power through the eyes. It exercises the power of control over the mouse and the mouse cannot get away. Sometimes you will notice a cat is trying to catch a pigeon. The pigeon may be on the cornice of a building or on some branch of a tree, and the pigeon might be resting, and as soon as the cat would catch the attention of the eyes of the pigeon, the pigeon would begin to feel its presence and be hypnotized as it were, and would not be able to get away; and there have been cases where these pigeons

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would fall right near the mouth of the cat as if hypnotized and unable to run away. That shows that the cat has the power of concentration or fixed attention, and also it has a kind of hypnotic influence upon its prey.

A crane has that power. A crane might be standing near the brook and intently watching the fish that is in the water; and the fish is moving rapidly; but it must concentrate its attention so strongly that it ceases to notice anything outside of that fish. And if a hunter is trying to shoot that thing, that thing would not notice him at all, but with its attention so strongly fixed the crane would succeed in catching the fish. How does it do it? All its muscles and sense powers are concentrated, focussed, on that one object; and the stronger the power of concentration of that attention the quicker would be the result. If any noise or any kind of disturbance would disturb the attention, then the object will disappear, it will not be brought within the range, and the effect will not be successful.

So, if we study the lower animals we find that this involuntary attention is exercised a great deal by the lower animals and by human beings also. First of all, this involuntary attention is exercised for food and for clothes, for the sustenance of the body, because nature has given that tendency in each one of us; but this simple involuntary attention can be developed into a voluntary attention through the force of habit and practice. This voluntary attention

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will help us to direct the energy of our minds towards abstract ideas, abstract objects, not only towards food and clothes, towards the material things which are necessary for the sustenance of the body, but towards intellectual objects, the objects of study, music, and scientific objects. These things are not attractive to us naturally, but a little culture is necessary. We must cultivate our minds to make ourselves familiar with the finer laws that are governing our intellectual, mental and spiritual realms. Ordinarily people do not pay attention to those things because their minds are not developed in those lines. Their minds are working on the material plane, on the sense plane, but there are other persons in whom these powers, the higher qualities of the mind, are developed and they would not be satisfied with merely material gain, but they would want to spend their time and energy in other pursuits of higher knowledge and realization. For instance, a moral man would not be satisfied to live like an animal, simply eating, drinking, and sleeping; and not observing the moral laws and realizing the peace and happiness that comes through self-sacrifice, through helping others, and so on. His mind on the contrary would be longing for such realization, such happiness. But if you ask an ordinary man who is living on the animal plane to have such kind of pleasure, that ordinary man will say he does not care for it. His mind will not be attracted to such things. If we study carefully we will find that everything

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that modern civilized communities possess is more or less the expression of one power of concentration or concentrated attention. All the discoveries of science, as I have already said, all the things that we enjoy, the objects of art and the beautiful furniture and different lovely things that we possess, all these are nothing but the results of the expression of that one power of concentrated attention.

Now conceive how a chair can be made without the power of concentration. Ask an idiot to make a chair; he cannot do it. Every action that we do and perform with our senses in order to produce any ordinary or remarkable result must have had as its foundation, the power of concentrated attention. Without this power of concentrated attention you cannot cook your meals. If you put something on the stove and you have forgotten or your mind is distracted to something else, the thing is spoiled, burnt, not fit to eat. You cannot walk in the streets without exercising some portion of this power of concentrated attention. You will be run over. Ninety-nine per cent. of our accidents are the results of inattention. That is lack of concentration.

All diseases that come through the violation of hygienic laws, are also the results of the same cause, inattention to the laws of health and strength, and the physical laws that govern our lives. So, if we wish to be proficient in any particular line, we must have the power of concentration. Without the power of concentration we cannot do anything. But this

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most important faculty has been neglected and overlooked in our modern times.

The Hindu psychologists divide mental conditions into five different parts. The first is the scattered state of mind or the *Kṣipta*. In that state the mental forces are running through the different gates of the senses in all directions. Just like the scattered rays of an electric lamp, it is going on in all directions. There is no rest, no peace in mind. Think of a man whose attention is scattered. Early in the morning he is sitting in his room, he is putting the chair from one place to another, and picking up a newspaper, poking the fire, trying to read a few lines from the paper, then dropping it, and taking up some other thing, he looks at a flower. Now, that is a miserable condition of life. You will find perhaps some of your acquaintances who are in that condition, and that is the scattered state of the mind, without any end, without any control over the activity of the brain, activity of the senses and sense organs. That is the typical example of an extremely scattered state of mind or of attention.

The next is the *Mudha* that is stupid. The scattered state (*kṣipta*) is one extreme, and the stupid (*mudha*) is the other. The mind is wholly idiotic, cannot think, cannot see anything clearly. Even when a man hears a sound, he cannot distinguish, cannot differentiate. The mind is slovenly and sleepy, and the intellectual faculties are covered, as it were,

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veiled. It has not the power to understand anything, to grasp any meaning. It might be reading a book but it does not produce any impression upon the brain. The brain is too thick, too solid, as it were, to be impressed upon. That would be the other extreme. There are some people living who have that kind of mind; that is, the extreme of stupidity.

The third state is the *Vikṣhipta* that swings between the two extremes : sometimes tremendously active and sometimes wholly stupid. You will find amongst all the people in ordinary affairs of life those who go from one extreme to the other. During their business hours they are busy in their mind; their mind is restless, planning and scheming and counting and trying to get everything in a short time. Then in reaction their mind becomes blank. They do not know what to do with it. They go to sleep or remain stupid.

The fourth state is called the *Ekāgra*, the one-pointed state of mind. That is the concentrated mind, in which all the faculties and various expressions of the mental energy are focussed and governed by the will-power and directed toward one object. This is what is called voluntary attention. That is, attention directed and governed by our will-power. Will-power, of course, is also very intimately connected with attention. That is, first of all we desire something, and if our attention is fixed upon the object of our desire, then the will or the force of

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will is generated. So attention helps the will-power, and the will-power again controls the attention. They are like two expressions of one force or one kind of energy. They are inseparably connected. If you study psychology, you will find perhaps that will-power is the result of concentrated attention; and other psychologists would say that concentrated attention is produced by highly developed will-power. So they are looking at the same thing from two different standpoints. From one standpoint we find will-power controls attention, and from another standpoint we find that attention develops the will-power; but they are simultaneous and inter-related. This concentrated attention or one-pointed state of mind is the most important thing to have, and that state is not described very much in modern psychology. But modern psychology tells us that our mind or attention can be fixed on one subject only for a very short time, and we cannot think of one subject for more than a few seconds, five or six seconds. And that is true, because naturally our mind is restless. Our attention requires a constant change. If you try to think of one object for a long time you will be bored, your mind will become disgusted; you want to have a change; and that wanting a change is exaggerated in the lives of those who wish to have a constant change of amusement. Most of the fashionable people like to have a continuous change, like a vaudeville performance; and a vaudeville performance is a thing that attracts those minds

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because they cannot fix their mind on one object. The moving picture shows are attractive to such minds. We like to have a continuous change. Like attracts like, and the companies are trying to cater to the weakness of the human minds, and that is how they make their fortune. What we like most is given to us. Why? Because they know our weakness. If you hold your mind on one object, they will give you a steady painting. In that way you can study your own mind by considering the different things that you are attracted to. The mind of a Yogi would never care for these continuously moving changeable objects, because their mind is different. They have controlled that tendency. A great many people will not be able to read or study one particular subject every day. They would like to have a change. They would like something that is light and pleasant at the same time and does not tax the attention very much.

But in order to develop this power of one-pointedness of our attention, we must practise every day. That is, ordinarily we cannot hold our mind on one object for any length of time, but through practice the power can be acquired, and it can be developed to such an extent that we can shut off all other objects and all other vibrations of senses which are constantly pouring into our brain through the gates of our senses. If that will-power is developed, then that power of control will come. How is this power of control manifested? By the ability to shut

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off these different vibrations and sensations that are constantly knocking at the door of our consciousness. Stop them; let them remain down below the threshold of our consciousness. That is will-power, the volitional effort. It is the efforts of attention governed by will-power that will produce most marvelous effects. How can you discover the highest moral and spiritual laws if you have not the concentrated or one-pointed state of mind? What is the nature of the soul? What is the nature of our true being? Whether we shall exist after death or not? All these questions often rise in our minds. How can we solve these problems except through concentration, except by concentrating our minds and holding our minds on those questions, those points, until we get the answer. The ordinary scientists might tell you by vivisection that we can catch the soul, if there be any. We can weigh and measure it. But they have been trying for years after years, but still they have not succeeded, because it is the most imperceptible, invisible something. By dissecting the brain you cannot find anything. You find only the instrument; no more than you can find music in a piano when you take the instrument apart. Why is that? The music is not there. The music is in the mind, in the soul of the musician; the piano is the instrument. The man who is dissecting the brain is doing like taking apart any musical instrument, and when he does not find it he says there is no such thing as a soul.

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But the one way by which we can understand the nature of the soul is by directing our attention or the whole mental energy towards our soul. Ordinarily the mind is like the electric light, but when the mind is fixed, when all the mental energy is focussed in one direction, then it becomes like a search-light. So we need a mental search-light, and this mental search-light is expressed by that term one-pointed state of mind (*Ekāgra*). Focus it towards one object, and let your whole energy go there. That will reveal those minute details connected with that object. There is no other way of learning anything about it.

Suppose you are using an instrument. That instrument would require the same one-pointed state of your mind. If your mind is distracted, you cannot look through that instrument, say a microscope or a telescope. If you are constantly disturbed by things and by these little thoughts and ideas that are surging up in your mind and attacking your consciousness, you will have to shut off all the sensations, and that will require the development of the will-power and concentrated attention. In one word, it is the one-pointed state of mind which is described by the Hindu psychologists as the *Ekāgra*, and that state of mind is the most valuable thing to have, because without that no knowledge can be acquired and concentration is at the root of all knowledge. What is a genius? A genius is one who has tremendous power of

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concentration. He can concentrate his mind so forcibly that he can go to the root of things and can find out the minute details and know them instantaneously. And that power of concentration would make an ordinary mortal, an ordinary mind, a genius. If a genius would lose the power of concentration, he would be regarded as an ordinary mortal of ordinary talent. He is no longer a genius but may be even an idiot. But on the contrary if an idiot can develop that concentrated state of mind through practice, he can hope to be counted among one of the best geniuses of the world. So wonderful is the power of concentration! By the power of concentration we can not only discover all the laws that govern the physical world, but also all the laws that govern our mental world, our intellectual, moral and spiritual world. Buddha re-discovered this wonderful ethical law: "Hatred is never conquered by hatred but by love." This is the everlasting ethical law. How should he discover that? Was there any outward sign in the external physical world? Nothing at all. But it is by the consideration of the finer forces of nature, finer forces of mind that are working in the form of hatred and love in the form of different emotions, that we realize that one form of emotion can be overcome by another form of emotion, and this can be realized only through concentration, by a concentrated mind. Christ discovered: "I and my Father are one," and the moral law: "Love thy neighbour as thyself"

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How could He discover that? You may say it is all by revelation. What is revelation? Revelation does not come to one unless one has that one-pointed state of mind. Revelation is coming all the time to us, but who is going to catch it? Revelation is pouring all the time into each mind, but the mind is not able to receive it. It is dissipated. But make the receiver ready to receive that revelation. How can you make it ready? By stopping all the disturbing elements, by focussing and conserving your energy. So by conservation of energy we can keep our minds quiet and peaceful and realize the law; and that is what Christ did. Therefore, He received the revelation. You must go into silence, and there if anything disturbs your mind, you must shut it off by your will-power, and then you will understand all the revelations, that Christ, Buddha and other Prophets received, and *inspiration* will come to you. What is inspiration? Inspiration is nothing but the disclosure of the higher Self within us, and that higher Self cannot be realized in a disturbed state of mind, when the attention is scattered. What would you do if there be fine music? You would say: "Listen, listen, there is some noise." You are putting your hand to your ear to catch the vibrations and fixing your attention. That is the way to catch finer vibrations. Why do you not do that to hear the voice of the Lord speaking constantly within you? That is what you have to do in silence, to listen to that voice. God is speaking all the time,

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but we are not ready to receive it. We do not care to hear it. We are too busy. We say: "Let Him speak. We have other things to attend to. We have to go to the movies and have some fun." That is the way we are living. Do we wonder why we have not realization here, why we have not learned anything that is worth learning? But we are learning all this trash. What are we gaining? Well, we are becoming smarter, we are getting smarter every day. That smartness would not be worth two cents, because we are neglecting the real thing that is beneficial to us. Concentration will explain all the problems and give us right knowledge. We are neglecting that and studying this trash, filling our minds with worthless things which will produce no good, either here or hereafter. Therefore, the Yogi says: "Make your mind through practice one-pointed, and then you will generate a mental search-light, and whatever you wish to know, throw a flood of search-light toward that object, and everything will be revealed to you. All the higher spiritual laws, the relation of soul to God, to the universe, relation of our life to the Universal life-force, everything will be known. There is no other method." The True psychologists of ancient India discovered these wonderful powers, which are described in the Râja Yôga by Patanjali. The Yogis did use simply the power of concentration. They had no other instrument. All that they realized and discovered through the mental search-light; all that they developed through

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concentration.

I have already described the four mental stages. Now the fifth state is that state of mind which is held under restraint or absolute control by the will-power. In that state the avenues of the senses are completely closed. Nothing can get into the mind. It is possible to cut off the connection entirely. The vibrations may be pouring into the brain; sensations may be going in constantly; but they fail to attack the plane of consciousness. It is entirely cut off. It is void. The brain itself cannot do it, and that proves that the brain is not all in all. It does not produce consciousness, intelligence, mind, or the soul; this the modern psychologists do not know, because they do not go into that state. They would consider perhaps that this is an abnormal state. It would be considered as disease. But why should it be considered a disease? Why should not our normal state be a disease, and this the real state? Because there are so many people in the normal state. Well, in the lunatic asylums there are a great many lunatics. That would not prove that the lunatic state is the normal. Imagine a city which is inhabited by lunatics. Will that be the standard of a normal state! Similarly this world is a lunatic asylum. People are crazy for clothes, wealth, for this and that, they never think of God, never think of anything else. They are just crazy. Go to the street and look. And it is so contagious that if we go and stand there for a while we must be running too. Haven't you noticed

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that if a man looks up in the street, everybody passing must do the same? We are just like a flock of sheep. We follow the sheep that goes first, and whatever he does we like to do. That is the human nature. If one person were to stand on his head and say : "This is the healthiest state, the perfect state ; I am getting all the wonderful powers by it," then everybody will try that. They have no discrimination. We have that same thing in India. The human mind is everywhere the same. A man will be hanging with his legs upward on the branch of a tree, with his swinging head downward, and he says he has attained to realization ; he can control the blood circulation ; the blood will not run to his head ; he can perform miracles. And everybody looks at him. But probably he can do nothing what he is saying. In that way let us find our weakness. What we ordinarily call our normal state is normal because we think so ; but if we rise on a different plane and find a handful of people there, that may yet be in a more normal state perhaps than those who are in a different state in which the majority are thinking. Therefore, the perfectly controlled state of mind which is the ideal state can be acquired through practice. And this can be acquired ; but all the disturbed conditions of your mind, your passions and desires, should be entirely controlled. And you would remain like a witness (*sâkṣî*), and in that witness-like state, the true nature of the soul is in its own glory. At all other times there is the reflection of the mental conditions

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upon the soul. Just as the soul may be compared to a pure crystal ball, purely white. It has no other colour. If you hold any flower or coloured substance near the crystal ball, the colour of the object will be reflected upon the ball. An ordinary mind may not be able to distinguish the real colour of the ball from the reflected colour, that is, the colour that is reflected on account of the object being near it. The only way that can be realized is by separating the object, taking it away from the crystal. Then you can see the purely white colour which is the natural colour of the crystal. In the same way we can know exactly what our true Self is by separating the mind substance, which is continuously throwing the reflection of its various states of emotions, of sensations, of feelings, of other mental conditions, upon the crystal ball of our true Self. And for that reason it is called the *Vritti*. At that state of perfect control of the mind substance, the true Self dwells in its own glory ('*sve mahimni*') and then we realize that our mind is only an instrument.

Mind is not the same as our true Self. The mind that is constantly moving and changing, that has all these different functions, different activities and different vibrations, is not our true Self, but our true Self is like a witness (*sâkṣi*) of that mind. That mind is like the medium through which the true Self, the intelligence of true Self is permeating our whole being. And that true Self has presence; therefore, it is a part of omnipresence; it has knowledge, there-

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fore, it is a part of the omniscient Being. So, our true Self is one with God in quality, but in quantity it is a part. At present we can only connect our true Self with the Universal Self in quality. It has the same all-knowing nature as God. It has the same omnipresence. It has all the powers and all intelligence. Therefore, in quality 'I and my Father are one' already. I have made it clear to you how we are like Christ, or in the same state already as Christ was when He said: "I and My Father are one." One in quality. Unity in diversity. I have explained to you that our minds are only the parts of the Universal mind, and the Universal mind is like an eternal current, eternal mental current, in which our little minds are like eddies. So we are connected with each individual mind through the Cosmic mind, and that mind is one, is universal in quality, but in quantity it is very small. Just as our body. Body is one in quality with the Cosmic body, but in quantity it is infinitesimally small, like a grain of sand; and the Universal body is infinitely large. The same forces that are working in the universe work in a miniature form in this human body. By the power of concentration we can know all this, and the highest result that can be attained on the spiritual plane is the attainment of Godconsciousness, which comes through concentration upon our true Self, which is a part and parcel of the Universal Being, which is eternal, birthless and deathless. So, our study of True psychology will produce the

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highest benefit in us when we have attained to that realization of our absolute Oneness with the Universal Being and make our body and mind like streams through which the Universal Being and the Infinite Will will be working all the time, without having any attachment to the physical conditions, without any sorrow, suffering, disease, but all the time enjoying the Divine glory of peace and everlasting happiness and eternal Love.

CHAPTER VI

INDIVIDUALITY AND PERSONALITY

In this chapter we shall study our own selves, our own personality, and try to be better acquainted with ourselves. The words *personality* and *individuality* have been used indiscriminately by different thinkers, without defining the distinction that exists between them; and even among the writers of higher thought, and even among philosophers, you will find that the word *personality* has been used in the sense of individuality and the word *individuality* in the sense of personality. Often I have heard questions like: "Shall we lose our individuality? Shall we lose our personality?" All such questions disturb the peace of our minds, and we try to find out exactly whether we shall continue to exist as persons or as individuals, because we take a great deal of interest in ourselves.

The love of self is at the root of all. Everything that we do, we do on account of love for ourselves, and that self-love is at the very foundation of our existence and we cannot help it. We do not wish to be lost or lose anything that we possess. The feeling of possession is very strong in us.

The personality of an individual is an idea or a concept which is very difficult to describe. You may think it is very easy to think of yourself, but when

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you try to analyze yourself or find out who you are in reality, you will discover that you are in a sea of troubles. We have this body, the senses, the mind, the mental functions, the intellect, the intellectual powers, reasoning, emotions and feelings. All these we have and we call ourselves as Mr. so-and-so or Mrs. so-and-so or Miss so-and-so, but we never go to the bottom of these things which I have just described to find out who we are in reality and where our this personality lies? When we say that we are persons what do we mean by that? Do we mean that we have bodies or material possessions or feelings or sensations or perceptions or ideas or thoughts or our particular characteristics, talents? What do we mean? You just try to find out what you mean by Mr. or Mrs. so-and-so.

What do you refer to? Do you refer to your personality of this very moment or of yesterday or of your childhood or of your youth or of what you will be tomorrow? What is your idea about it? You will find that it is very difficult for you to explain what you mean by your own personality.

But when we think about it and try to find the proper description of personality of ourselves, we find that our personality is double, is a duplex; it is of two kinds of things or ideas that we have in ourselves. The one is *me* and the other is *I*. Now these two terms we often use, but we do not distinguish the difference. The words *me* and *I* make up our personality. The *me* refers to something that is objec-

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tive, that I know; and *I* refers to something that it knows. So *me* and *I* in reality are partially object and partially subject. And the combination of these two makes up our personality.

Now again, that *me* which is the object of our consciousness or knowledge consists of different things. It has material constituents or elements and it has social elements; it has spiritual and moral elements, and so on. When we analyze our sense of *me* we find that first of all we have the body. That is the material element, the gross physical body, and we call ourselves as one with the body. That is, we identify ourselves with the body. We are inseparable from the body. That becomes the whole of *me*. Then next to that will come the family, the relatives and home and everything that you possess. The old saying: "the soul, body and clothes" is not merely a joke you know, because many people would rather think more of their clothes than of their body. They would rather have an ugly body and fine clothes than a fine body and ugly clothes. Which would most people prefer to have, either an ugly body and fine clothes or a fine body and shabby clothes? Very few would prefer shabby clothes with a fine body. In the world you will find that. That is true here because we like to look beautiful. That love of self is at the root again. But that love of self has become identified with the physical body and it goes outside of the body to the clothes, to the things that we possess, furniture, wealth, bank account, and every-

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thing. Then we love not only ourselves but those who are related to us, and that becomes also a part of our personality. The father, mother, wife, husband, children, and brothers and sisters, all these become a part of our personality. We do not like to lose any one of them or do not like to see any one of those, our relatives or friends injured or hurt or in any way displeased. We try to feel ourselves in perfect harmony with all of them, and then we are in a way contented and satisfied.

Then there is another personality which refers to the social side, our social position, social honour. That is, the recognition by others of our own kind in the society where we live, and that is another extension or kind of expansion of our personality. That is, in the society where we live we care a great deal for their opinion. If we belong to any club we care more for the club opinion than for the opinion perhaps of our home or relatives, because that brings out some phase in ourselves, a kind of pride or conceit or egotism or something of self-love, that brings out a certain feeling in us which must be gratified; and in social life we win that. You know a thief will never steal from a thief. That is his honour. A gambler would first of all rather pay off gambling debts than other debts. It is a point of honour, because his social *me* is very strong there. In every avocation of life you will find this is so, that is, the people who belong to the same profession or hold the same position or belong to the same society are

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considered first. That is the social *me* in ourselves, the social side of our personal life.

And then there is the spiritual side. When you go to church you have your spiritual self very prominent, your spiritual *me*. What is that? That is your whole being, as it were, which includes all your powers, your characteristics, your intellectual faculties, moral faculties, and your spiritual ideals and your conceptions of God, your conception of the future, all these make up your spiritual *I* or spiritual *me* or spiritual personality. You may expect certain things after death, for instance, going to heaven. You have that idea and you want to avoid some torture or punishment that is allotted to the wicked ones. You try to be free from all discomfort, unhappiness, that might come to you and you seek all the pleasures that the celestial beings are enjoying. These are your conceptions and ideals that you have in your mind. You cannot separate yourself from those ideas. They have become a part of yourself, that is your spiritual self.

Now when you analyze in this way, you will find that the personality of yourself which just now you are conscious of, is the sum total of all these feelings, all these thoughts, passions, desires, and everything that comes up in your conscious being. Then again if you go deeper and try to compare the personality of today with that of yesterday and with that which you had ten years ago, you will find that it has gone through a great many changes. In every minute

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detail you will find everything has changed. Your ideas have changed, your feelings have changed. You do not perhaps feel the same way as you did ten years ago. You do not have the same conception of the outside world. In this way you will find, when you properly analyze your whole nature, that you have gone through all these minute changes. We are, in fact, changing every minute. Our body is changing. Every seventh year we have new particles, new matter, in our bodies. That is, the physical particles are entirely renewed. We have not the same brain which we had ten years ago. We have not the same eyes, the same sense organs as we had when we were younger. This is a fact. You cannot deny it. Still when we call ourselves 'person' or 'I' or 'me', we do not recognize those changes. Now the personality of today will not be the same of tomorrow or of the next year. It will be changed entirely. It will be a different thing altogether. We would not have the same body, we would not have the same sense faculties and brain powers. They will be all growing bigger and wider perhaps, or growing less. Some kind of change will take place. Now this is our personality. If you analyze that, there is a continuous change, a constant change, in ourselves. In fact, we are like an atom of matter, every particle of which is revolving around its axis or around one centre which is positive, and that centre is in each one of us.

You would realize that, if you have noticed your own

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body through X-rays. You must have discovered that your body is nothing but a mass of most fine particles of matter, which is covering the outlines of your body structure. Every second it is going through a tremendous change. The constant influx and efflux of finer particles of matter make up the wherewithal of our physical form. Every time we get a sensation, that sensation may be little different from the sensation which we had before, and then our sensations will be the groundwork or foundation of our percepts and concepts, thoughts and ideas. Our intellect has changed. Our thoughts have changed. But at the same time we do not recognize these changes. We have a sense of personal identity. We think that we are the same one.

Now what is in us that brings out that sense of identity, that I am the same one who lectured here yesterday or last year, and you are the same one who heard me yesterday and are hearing me now? What makes that feeling of sameness? That has ever been the great compelling question in the minds of all the great thinkers of the world.

You see how difficult it is to describe, that source from which we get that idea of sameness, that I was the same one who went to schools and played with playmates and went through all kinds of experiences. We have a phase of memory, that brings up the faculty of memory. Of course, our life depends a great deal upon our memory, but is memory all in all? Do you think that our whole life, our persona-

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lity or identity depends entirely upon memory? Memory might be very poor in some cases. It is subject to change.

There is alteration of memory. Sometimes you will find abnormal cases where the memory becomes weak, and the personality of today might not remember exactly the experiences and sensations and perceptions of heat and cold which that individual had perhaps the year before, or a few years before. Now that will make the alteration of memory, but at the same time in that case you will notice the individual is conscious of the changes that he is going through and that consciousness is not changed. That is, the conscious 'I' is the same which is stringing together these various experiences and thoughts and ideas, although the power of memory might be weak.

Now each individual is a bundle of sensations, thoughts and ideas. This bundle of sensations, thoughts and ideas may be regarded as a stream, a stream of conscious states one following the other. Just as in a river, for instance, you see a continuous flow of water. If you look at one point in that stream you see the water is there, but the same particle of water that you saw just a minute ago or half a second ago is gone and its place is taken by another drop of water. You see it is constantly changing, but the unchangeable stream is there. That idea has been taken up by the modern psychologists, who do not believe in the existence of a soul as an entity, distinct

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from these various functions of the mind,. That idea was very strong among some of the Buddhist thinkers, and the Buddhist philosophy has taken up that phase of psychology or philosophy which denies the existence of a personality, individual entity as distinct from the changeable phenomena of the mind, intellect, and the physical body. They have regarded that there is a stream, the stream of consciousness, in which one particular unit of consciousness or sensations or feeling is always influx, and they explain the personal identity by saying that it is a matter of quantity. A certain state of consciousness is changed into another state, but a portion of it is left, which is carried on, and a portion is eliminated, but the continuity is kept up. It is a matter of quantity. But at the same time they do not search further to go beyond this changeable mental state.

The philosopher Hume denies the existence of a soul or ego as a separate entity. He says :

“When I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. When my perceptions are removed for anytime, as by sound sleep, so long I am insensible of myself and may be truly said not to exist. Were all my perceptions removed by death and I could neither think nor feel nor see nor love nor hate after the dissolution of my body, I should be entirely annihilated; nor do I see what is further required to make me a perfect non-entity.”

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Hume carries his psychology and philosophy to absolute nihilism. According to him nothing exists but a bundle of ideas and impressions that are held together by some mysterious force, and there is left nothing else. And it is Kant who afterwards has made a revival of the true philosophy from another view-point, because Hume had killed all psychology by saying there is no constant and permanent thing in experience. It is all floating like clouds. Clouds are floating in eternal void one after another; and so these bundles of sensations are passing like fluxes. But where are they passing and who is conscious of them? He is not going deep enough to explain that.

Modern psychologists would say that the thoughts and thinkers are one, thoughts are conscious of themselves. There is no necessity of believing in something beyond themselves, the something that feels, the something that perceives. The thinker, knower and perceiver, they consider as one with the thoughts. That is, thoughts are knowing themselves, are conscious of themselves. But is that true?

That much you can get by studying modern psychology, that thoughts and thinkers are one. But in reality you will find that it is not true psychology. You may have a thought. Now what is that thought? The German philosopher Fichte, once said somewhere in his philosophy that thoughts are the products of thinking, and there must be a *thinking principle* which thinks, and the product of thinking is a

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thought, and you become conscious of this thought. So, when you analyze very deeply and very minutely your own being, there you will find that you are looking at your thought, as it were, as you would look at any external object. You can separate yourself from the thought. You are outside of your thought. Thought is just like a photograph, like an image that has come to your mind, and that thought is an object of your consciousness. It is not the thought that is conscious of itself, but you are conscious of the thought, and that thought might pass away, another thought might take its place, and you are just like a by-stander. You are looking at it as it comes, and you know as it goes, and you know also when another thought comes and takes its place. Now, that phenomenon we cannot deny. The more we go deep into our own beings, the more we find that there is something which is not empirical ego, that is 'me,' but that is a pure ego, that is 'I,' and that is the relation between the empirical and the pure ego. That is the phenomenon, which we cannot deny. The pure ego is that which knows, which thinks. This pure ego when it is clothed by thoughts and thinking powers of the mind, becomes a thinker. When it is clothed with the garments of ideas, emotions and feelings, then it becomes a feeler, a perceiver. When it is clothed with the garment of the sense powers, when it is connected with this power of perceiving, it becomes a perceiver. When it is connected with the power of hearing, it becomes a hearer. When it is

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connected or identified with the power of smelling then it smells. Now, you see your innermost core is behind, and there is something of a medium in you that is finer matter in vibration. You may call that finer matter as electrons or rather proto-electrons that are in vibration, or give it any other name; but in the Oriental philosophy, in the Hindu philosophy, it is called the finer matter or ethereal particles. These finer particles of matter are transparent. That is, they are not so gross as external matter of the outside world. They are finer and they are transparent. These finer particles of matter are vibrating with a tremendous speed. You know that among our perceptions we can hear an audible sound when a vibration of air is 32,000 in a second, and we cannot hear the vibration that is beyond the rate of that vibration, beyond 32,000 per second, or nearly 40,000. That would be the range of our perception of sound. There is a range of our perception of smell, of the feeling and of touch. So, you see, we can get sensations within that range, but there might be other sounds which are lower in vibration or higher in vibration in the universe, and we cannot hear them. Our senses do not reveal those things. As Prof. Huxley once said, when a rose-bud blossoms it makes a noise that would be as loud as the firing of a cannon-ball, but we do not hear it. We have not the power to hear it. Some day we may invent a certain kind of instrument that would reveal to us the imperceptible sounds which are

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below the range of our perception. What does that show? That shows there are finer manifestations and finer objects of sensation which we cannot know at present. Voltaire said once that if we had a thousand senses instead of five, we would see the world in a different light. It would not be the same world to us as we have it now.

These are limitations; and within these limitations we are working. These limitations we do not feel at present, because we are too busy with our self-interest, and that self-interest is working in a very narrow circle, that is, pertaining to our body, our little home life or social life, which is infinitesimally small compared to this infinite universe. There we are like little worms in a mud puddle. That is our conception of life. But the greater conception of life we have ignored. How can we find the greater conception? By analyzing our personality in relation to self-interest and to the external objects of our sense perception. We must go deeper and deeper, go to the bottom of things and to the finer objects which we do not perceive now, which we do not think of now. Then we will have a different idea of our personality.

Now, this stream of consciousness, each unit of which is within time and space, is continually flowing. Each is specialized, just as your own personality. When you feel a pain, that pain is not merely a sensation that is floating in the mental space, but it is *your* pain. It is not the pain of anyone else. There is a differ-

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ence. My feeling is my own feeling. It is specialized in relation to me. What makes that my feeling? Because it is related to something which is 'I' the knower and the subject, which feels, and that subject is not the effect of that feeling. When you look at a chair, the chair is the object of your sight. You could not be the same as the chair. All mental ideas are the objects of your knowledge, of your consciousness, and if you can distinguish the subject from the object, you will have a greater knowledge not only of your personality, but you will be able to understand what your individuality is. Our personality depends upon the egohood, and this sense of 'I' and 'me,' which are duplex and very complicated, interwoven with one another. We cannot separate the sense of 'I' from the sense of 'me,' and that is our personality, there is something like the string in a garland or a necklace of pearls. Now the little pearls may be compared to your states of consciousness, units of sensation, and there is a string that goes through each one of them and holds them together and makes a beautiful necklace. That string is not visible from outside. If I hold a necklace in front of you, all the pearls will appear as strung together; there might be a single thread inside, but you do not see it. If you want to see that chain, you will have to go inside the pearls to that golden thread that links them together. Ordinary people, whether they are philosophers or psychologists, do not go deep enough to find out that thread. They are satisfied with the

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states of consciousness, these feelings, sensations, percepts, concepts and ideas, each one of which is changing and is not the same which it was a minute ago. But it is that string of our own self, our own individuality, that holds them together and makes them a complete whole. There is that string of our own individuality, *which is not a thought, not a function of the mind, not a function of our intellect, not a sensation, not a percept or a concept, but which is the unifying element of all and which makes each one of them related to us.* Now, that is our individuality, that is the background of the personality; and that individuality does not change. So, in yourself you will find something that does not change in the midst of all changes. That is your pure Self or pure Ego. It is the source of consciousness. Consciousness is a relative state. It is a state in which the subject and the object of knowledge are related. Now, that object of knowledge may be a chair, may be a table, a flower, a feeling of chill or cold or a feeling of warmth, or an idea, or an image which you have made either by reading a book or hearing a sentence, any mental image in your mind. That might be the object of your knowledge, and your relation to that object. In other words, the relation between the object and yourself the subject, would make that state of consciousness. But that which is conscious of these things is not the same as the object of consciousness. Now we shall have to realize that. Then we shall be able to discriminate aright

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and go to our innermost being and find out our individuality. Individuality refers to that greater self within us. That does not change. The word *individual* literally means 'that which is indivisible, that which cannot be divided.' You cannot divide your consciousness, your being, your sense of 'I', and cannot find any break, a gap, or separation. You cannot do that because it is a continuous state like ether. Ether is like a gelatinous substance. There is no space between the particles of ether; it is one mass. You cannot divide or cut it or make a gap in it. It is the same case with your individuality. Therefore, we cannot make a gap in our self. Our memory might fail. We may have double, triple, or quadruple personality, as there have been cases. In the case of insane persons there might be a delusion. One might think of himself as Napoleon and forget his birth and forget everything related to his physical conditions and earthly life, and he is just overwhelmed with the idea that he is a Napoleon. He takes a false premise, and then thinks of himself as with it. In that self-delusion he is conscious of himself on that one plane, hence it is a self-hypnotized idea. That self-hypnotism is possible. In the case of mediums there are changes of memory and of personality. One medium might be possessed by self-hypnotism, auto-suggestion or some discarnate spirit influence. In that case, that medium might not remember exactly in the state of trance what he was before, or what his normal life was; but even in his

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trance condition, his individuality is at work, when he knows what he is doing or thinking even in his trance like condition and conscious of himself as Mr. so-and-so, or as an angel, or as Napoleon. That source of consciousness is there behind that delusion; and that makes the delusion a reality.

What makes our dream a reality when we are dreaming? The sense of 'I', the source of consciousness that makes us related to that dreamlike state; because that sense of 'I' or the source of consciousness, is real. Everything that is connected with it for the time being appears as real. It catches the reflection of reality. So you see, we delude ourselves by thinking it permanent, and it will always remain like that. Why? Because we cannot think of ourselves as broken up, as going to be a non-entity or destroyed. As for example, try to think yourself as dead. You can never do that. When you try to think of yourself as dead you will have the mental picture of a dead body—something like yourself as you have seen in the mirror, and you are looking at it. You are there but you are not dead. Your body is dead. You are looking at it. How can we think of ourselves as dead? That is one of the strongest proofs of our immortal nature. Try to think of yourself as going into nothingness. You cannot. It would be impossible. Your very consciousness will not permit it to think of yourself as a non-entity, as not existing. You cannot. So,

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that indivisible reality which is the background of personality is the real in us.

Let me give another illustration. Suppose you are looking at a beautiful portrait painted on a canvas. This portrait, which is very beautiful, is the outside appearance, and that is outside me; but the canvas is a background upon which this portrait stands. If you take away that canvas the portrait is gone. So, like the canvas, your individuality is the background upon which the portrait of your personality is resting for the time being, but that personality will change as it is changing now constantly. You cannot hold on to any personality or state for ever, because you are in the stream. It is constantly going. We will have to let it go. You cannot stop it. When you are thinking of your personality you should remember that you are the real individual who has to watch the personality, just as you impersonate on the stage. The word *personality* is derived from Latin *persona*, which means "mask". When the individual, true ego, or true self, puts on the mask of a particular person, which is related to a particular body and sense powers, with a language, with nationality, and with all the relations in connection with the home life and parents and so on, then all these make up your personality. But your individuality is more lasting, is immortally related, while your personality is a changeable something. So, at the time of death what happens? You throw off a portion of your personality. You leave a portion of your personality

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here; your physical body, that goes and is destroyed. Your personality splits. You leave a portion here with all its relations. You take another portion of your personality, the ideas, thoughts, sensations, feelings, emotions, your experience you have gathered during your lifetime, that is a part of your personality, and you take that with you. And individuality is the background of that too. You carry that with you, your character, the sensations, thoughts, ideas that go with your subtle body. Your physical body remains here. Your subtle body goes with you. It may go to this, or to another planet or sphere or plane of consciousness, but it can never be lost. It will continue to roll on and on for ever, but it is subject to change. By *change* I mean it is subject to growth, progress and evolution. That personality may come back again in another form on this plane. Then your personality will be different. When you talk about reincarnation, the personality of that individual who is reincarnated cannot be the same, because it is subject to *change*; but the elements, the constituent elements of the personality re-embody themselves as an individual, as a human being. The ego is there; the powers of perception are there. Your memory might have its limitations. You might not remember all the things that you experienced in your previous life. But you cannot have the same personality, because your present personality is related to your birth, to limitations of time, space, home life, and nationality. It would not be the same

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personality, but it would be the same individuality. We can lose our personality. It can be split up. We may have two, three or four personalities. One might be disconnected with another. A girl had four personalities, that is, in each state she would be a different person and she would remember nothing of her previous state. Another state of personality will come and she will remember nothing of what happened in her previous personality, but there will be a continuous thread between the successive stages of first personality, successive stages of second personality, and so on, and there would be a connection. That is very peculiar. But it is the individuality that strings together these thought bodies. We may form a thought body of our own. In abnormal cases, some maniacs create a thought body of their own and become identified with it and cannot separate themselves from it. Then, perhaps through hypnotism or some other treatment, that thought body can be awakened, and the maniac would no longer be a maniac. It is a strong auto-suggestion that he has got and he has felt himself hypnotized. We are hypnotized by this idea of our own personality, and we need a dehypnotization, and that will make us realize our individual pure self, which is glorious, immortal, and not a part of the changeable states of mind and body. Now, this individuality is the greater self. This greater self means it is like the Self of the universe, the Cosmic Ego. I will give you an illustration of a

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leaf of a tree. Suppose, the leaf which is on a tiny little branch, that leaf has a personality. Each leaf has a personality. And each leaf is not conscious of the personality of other leaves, and this personality is sustained by the sap of the tree that goes to each other. That sap may be a greater race soul or race individuality, and then one race might be like one branch, and there may be other branches. And so a race individual or the great individual of a race, one sum total, would be like the soul of one branch, and there would be other branches, and all these branches have come out from the common trunk. That common trunk is like the Absolute, which contains all, and your national or racial self will be like one branch. But you must not think that is all in all. Just as some people might think that their own individuality is all in all, without recognizing those of others. It is not the *ego* or the sense of '*I*' that is our individuality, not that sense of '*I*'. That is a function. It rises in our mind just like a bubble. It is coming up. The sense of '*I*' is constantly beating, like the tuning fork, and it has produced that sound, the *I, I, I*, but when you go to a greater individuality, there is no sense of '*I*' or '*me*'. Greater individuality never says '*I*'. It is the source but it has no sense of function of '*I*'. It is all knowledge and all intelligence. It is all happiness. It is all existence. It does not know anything because it is all knowledge. Now, God is all knowledge, just like an ocean of knowledge and intelligence. He

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is the source of consciousness, life and happiness. All these are there. But the ego, which is the apparent man, as we should say, and the individual, which is the real self, should be distinguished. And the apparent self gets its happiness and knowledge; as reflected from the source of all knowledge and all happiness. Remember that. Whenever you get happiness in your life you do not get it from the object outside of your self, but you get the happiness in a state when your desire is gratified, when your mind is peaceful and transparent so that the reflection of happiness, which is in you individuality, may come upon your self or your ego, and you get it and enjoy it.

If you can hold your mind in peace, in an undisturbed state all the time, you will always be happy. That is the secret of happiness; but with all these things running around you will never be happy, because your mind will be muddled and agitated. But if you will let that Divine light of knowledge and happiness shine upon the head of your ego, you will find there a blissful state; you will forget your personality. You will transcend it.

This personality may be regarded as Jesus, and this individuality may be regarded as Christ. Now, Christ individuality is in each one of us. It is a part of the greater 'I'. Our individual ego is trying to trace the source of its consciousness, of its existence, of its life, just as a leaf is trying to find out how its particular personality has come to it. It may think: "I

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have no relation to the tree, to the other branches," but when it wakes up and begins to search within, it finds that the sap which is coming to it, is coming from the same source from which the sap of the other leaves is going. Each one has a channel. Then it begins to see this relation to the other leaves and branches, and it cannot ignore their existence. On the contrary, it feels oneness.

Think yourself as a leaf. You cannot feel oneness outwardly with the leaf. Outwardly each leaf is different from one another and from you. In time and space each leaf has its distinct body. But go to the innermost being, to the source of your sap which nourishes you and the leaves, and there you will find the oneness. The same sap that nourishes you, is nourishing me, but you do not see it. There may be a change of colour, of expression, of language, of the habits, manners and customs and all other changes, but they do not affect the individual. Now I am speaking to you in English. I have been so long doing that, that English has become like my mother tongue. Today I have a new personality, which is entirely different from what I had when I was in India. I did not speak the same language, wear the same clothes, have the same surroundings, did not have any relation to any of these places or things in which I am interested now. So, if you have a summer and a winter home and a villa in Italy, you are in three personalities. Suppose you are speaking Italian or French. You have a chateau in France

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somewhere and in speaking French, mixing with French people, you have a different personality. You may manipulate three personalities in three different times. The individual may manipulate many personalities. You may manipulate one personality here, another in your office, and another in your home. You do that all the time, only unconsciously. How do you manipulate your personality when you are walking along the street? How do you manage? You are regulating the muscles of your feet and looking out for automobiles, so that you might not be run over, and at the same time continue your sight-seeing. Then you meet a friend. All these things you do. You have only one mind that does all these. Each is connected with a portion of your separate personality, and you are the sum total of all, but you must not forget that as you are a person, so, others are in the same way. You cannot know any other unless you know yourself. You cannot enter into my feelings nor I into yours. You infer from your own feeling what kind of feeling I would have, by my expression, my words, and motions of the limbs or different organic functions. You infer it. But when you go to the source, to our individuality, which is unchangeable, which is birthless and deathless, then we find the one source of all, and you may call it the *Spirit*. You may call it by any name you like, but you can never know it unless you know the background of your personality. Personality is a compound, while

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your individuality is the simplest thing in the universe. It is the knower. There is only one knower, and that knower is a part of the Universal Knower, which is God. Your own true self is by its birthright part and parcel of this Infinite Being. You cannot die. Do not be afraid of death. That fear is a state of consciousness. Do not be elated when anybody praises you. Do not be attached to your clothes or furniture. That is bondage. That bondage will hold us down to this plane and make us unhappy. Every act of bondage makes us slaves, and then we forget our real individuality, which is always free. And that freedom is our birthright, but we do not know how to enjoy freedom. We are playing the part of a fool. We have hypnotized ourselves and we need someone to awaken us and help us in rising above this state of self-delusion. And we are seeking that. But remember that as soon as we have begun to seek that, we have made a great progress; and that is the search after freedom, the desire to be free, the desire to get over these struggles. We have gained our experience; now it is our time to go back on our return journey towards the very core of our being, the heart of our hearts, the Soul of our souls, the Life of our life, this Eternal Being, the Eternal Knower, which is the *real individual*.

So, when you understand the difference between personality and individuality, you will know that the personality is changeable, and you are the real individual. You can never lose your individuality,

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no matter where you go. When Christ realized His individuality as one with His Father in Heaven, He did not lose His individuality, but He became conscious of His greater individuality in the Father as Immortal Being. He became conscious of His Infinite Individuality. He went to the source of all life. So, we are marching onward to that goal, and we cannot stop until it is reached, until we have become one with that Infinite Being.

CHAPTER VII

STATES OF EXISTENCE

In my last lecture you heard about the difference between the *individuality* and the *personality*. Our whole life depends upon our individuality, and our personality is like apparent reality. But our true reality is individuality. That is our true self. When we think of ourselves and see things around us, we always have this feelings, that we exist and the things around us exist also. When we see a chair, that chair seems to be there, and we have the feeling that it exists. It is not only a piece of wood bent in its shape, but there is a feeling of existence. Now what is that existence? What is the real existence of the chair, or of the flower, or of anything that we see with our eyes, or of a sound which we hear with our ears? All these things are like different conditions of existence.

Now, if we analyze our perception of the chair, we shall find that the chair exists so long as there is the name and form of the chair. Take away the name and form of the chair, it will turn into common wood. Take away the name and form of wood, there will remain nothing but atoms and molecules. Take away the names and forms of the atoms and molecules, what will remain there? That which has produced the atoms and molecules. Now, you see

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that which has produced atoms and molecules exists just in the same way perhaps as the chair exists, but apparently they are two different things.

Take a pot made of earth, or an ornament made of gold. Take a bracelet. When you think of a bracelet you think of its form and its name ; but that is not as real as gold itself, because you can break the bracelet, but you cannot break gold. When you break it, its form is gone, and consequently, its name is gone too. But the reality that underlies that bracelet is the gold. That gold will remain. In the same way, if we analyze the chair we will find that what has produced the atoms and molecules of the chair is like gold. Wood holds the same relation to the chair as gold in relation to the bracelet. Now, when we understand this, we go down to the reality of things. Chair outside of its name and form produced the feeling in us of existence. The flower outside of its name and form produced in us a feeling of existence. Everything that we perceive with our senses has a close connection with this existence.

Now, this existence should be known ; what it is and whether it changes or not. Everything seems to change, but the feeling of existence does not change. When the chair is destroyed, the feeling of existence would remain with other chairs and with other things, and at the same time it will remain with the nameless and formless chair, that is wood, and the particles of atoms and molecules, or that which

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produces the atoms and molecules.

Now, when you understand so clearly as to realize that existence is universal—you can analyze everything of this universe and reduce it to its primordial state, which is existence. And when that existence is universal it cannot be more than one. It is only existence.

The existence that is in the chair is also in the table. Take away the name and form of the table and take away the name and form of the chair, the existence in these two objects is the same. Similarly, you can connect that existence with a book, with a tree, with an animal, with our human body, only the manifestation of that existence is in various forms and in various names. So, we come to the point of one existence in reality appearing through different names and forms. That is the whole condition of this world. The whole universe, the sun, moon, stars, and planets, and all that exist on this earth, all that we can perceive with our senses, have the one source of existence, *plus* their individual names and forms, which are produced by a combination of atoms and molecules and different forces of nature.

We may consider this existence, which is universal, like the ocean. In this ocean of existence, the sun, moon, stars, and planets are like so many waves, so many bubbles. They are constantly rising and going down. That will give you an idea of the unity in the variety of appearances.

Now, you understand the meaning of *appearance*.

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When this existence works within the limitations of time and space, it becomes an *appearance* of that existence. A chair exists in time and space; a table exists in time and space; a book exists in time and space; everything exists in time and space. That is, we shall have to understand that *form* means an extension in space; and *time* refers to its birth and death. Now the chair had its birth. Where and when? When the carpenter formed a mental image of the chair, that was the beginning of the chair; of course, on the mental plane. Then afterwards he projected his mental image outside and on the material of wood; then he gave that shape. There happened the birth of the chair. Everything that has birth must go through the changes of decay, and eventually, must die. Our body had its birth, and the body is subject to growth, and gradually it will decay, and it will die. So, everything that is apparent is subject to change. Of course, the particles of matter are constantly changing and constantly moving. There is the vibration or motion in every particle of matter, and we cannot see the same thing twice in the same way. You may think that we see the same sun. The same sun rises day after day, but when you study the conditions under which these phenomena are appearing, you will notice that the constant change is going on everywhere. Your eye-balls are changing; your brain cells are changing; and the vibrations of ether are changing; and the sun himself is changing. In the midst of these changes

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there is nothing that is permanent, and we are constantly watching these changes, but apparently we delude ourselves by thinking that we see the same thing day after day ; but we do not. You do not see the same face twice in the same way, because the face is changing constantly. And we are all subject to growth and change.

In the midst of all these changes, the only thing that does not change is *existence*. Now, try to understand that. That existence is truth, is reality. It is called in Sanskrit *Sat*, that which *is*. It can never change. It may appear through another name and form, but existence which is beyond time and space, is unchangeable. It is the Absolute. This Absolute Existence which I have already described as the ocean, is the Reality, and it is the Eternal Substance. In it everything exists. Out of it everything comes, and everything goes back into it at the time of dissolution. That is called in Sanskrit *Brahman*. *Brahman* is the Absolute Reality of the universe, the Absolute Existence. Now, this *Brahman* is one without a second : '*Eṁamevâdvityam.*' You may think that there are many things, but the underlying current of existence permeates through the atoms and molecules of every name and form of the thing that we perceive with our senses. This will give you an idea that the same existence which is in the sun, is in the most remote stars, in the planets, in the nebulous mass and everywhere. There the whole universe is like a painting upon this canvas of the Eternal

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Existence. It has no change, but anything that has taken a form, exists. It draws its existence from that ocean of Existence, appears as individualized existent thing or object. And then it dissolves again and goes back to its primordial condition.

For instance, the electrons are the finer particles of matter, and when they come together and by the force of attraction produce atoms, and the atoms produce molecules, and the molecules produce the elements of nature, and when the elements of nature come together they produce everything that we perceive with our senses.

Now, the food that we eat, any kind of vegetable product, is nothing but the combination of atoms and molecules. We say potato exists; any other vegetable exists; meat exists; particular dishes like soup or anything else exists; fruit exists; nuts exist; and all these existing things we put into our system which also exist; and then we think we have eaten, and we have a particular feeling that we have gratified our appetite. And we feel good and happy. And what is happening inside? It goes through a chemical change and in course of time this food-stuff that has entered into our system is transmuted into blood, into different elements that make up our physical form. It produces the nervous energy, and it sustains our brain cells. It has all been transmuted into these different things. It has gone through a change, a radical change. So, our body is made up of these changes. Every time we eat something; we

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are gathering from outside new particles of matter and replenishing the waste matter that is thrown out of the system. So, this continuous influx and efflux of the finer particles of matter will make up our physical form, and that is just like an eddy in the ocean of ether. If you can imagine your body just like a whirlpool in the ocean of ether, then that would be a good illustration. It is constantly revolving round and round, moving and changing its position. That is going on in our system all the time. But in every particle of this physical form you will notice that there is the same existence, which forms like a background, and cannot be separated, it is closely related to everything, however minute the particle of matter is. In fact, this one ocean of existence is manifesting itself in these various forms, but the names and forms are not realities; and if you want to find out the reality of soul, the reality of the universe, you will have to go to that source of existence which is the Universal Existence,—Absolute Existence, or God or the Universal Spirit, or whatever you may call it. There you will find some clue, something that is more substantial than mere thoughts. These exist. Everything that we say, sounds or words, they all exist, and, therefore, existence is the reality. And everything else is like a dream.

When a child is born, its brain receives the sensation. It does not know what is going on in its system. It is in a state of confusion. Its mind is not able to

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discriminate. It is receiving all these impressions that are coming through the doors of sense organs. The eyes are made in such a way by nature that they can receive only the vibrations of light. The vibrations of sound will never affect the eyes, and the vibrations of light will never affect the ears. The eyes and ears are just like different conduits closed in a box, one is impervious to the light and the other to the sound waves. The optic nerves would be impervious to the sound waves, and the auditory nerves to the light waves. They are wonderful constructions of nature. Through these conduits the brain receives the impressions. The brain receives the impression of light through the optic nerves. And the child, when it first opens its eyes, does not see anything. It simply finds the light impression. It does not see light although it is there. Its mind is one with light. When a sound enters its auditory nerves and is carried to the brain, it becomes one with the sound. They are in different parts of the brain. It would require some intelligent mind to connect these different centres. Just as you have different keys on the piano and you will have to span your fingers in order to touch the different keys and get them together and mix them and fuse one into the other. Now, that is not done by the brain itself. We have the same difference now. Our experience of the outside world is, to begin with, nothing but a confusion; we do not know anything. We refer back to our past experience when this confusion comes, and a

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discriminating faculty of the mind discriminates these different conditions, compares with the previous experiences, and produces images through memory, and then it produces another image, another idea, that the external world is like this. And in this way we are living now. This is what we call our waking state of existence. Now, this waking state of existence appears to us as real so long as we are in direct connection with the organs and with the external objects. We know the external objects simply by the contact of the external objects with our sense organs, and that contact produces different sensations, and these sensations are changeable. They are either agreeable or disagreeable. When they are agreeable we call them pleasant; when they are disagreeable we call them painful. So, this feeling of pain or the feeling of pleasure is not a real thing. It appears to be real for the time being, but it is like an infinitesimally small point in the chain of the various sensations that are coming in a stream, entering into our brain in the form of a stream.

Now, these are regarded like dreams, and this will give you a real definition of the Christian Science theory that you must not think that you have pain, pleasure, this feeling and that feeling. They are all like delusions. In reality, they are like delusions, like dreams; but your existence, which is inseparable, gains from them knowledge or intelligence or consciousness. Now, that will make you realize that you exist, because you are conscious of

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your existence. And the pain is a feeling that comes and rises like a bubble in the small sea of your existence. When you feel a mosquito bite, a little sensation of pain feeling rises there like a bubble or a little wave, and you are conscious of that; then it passes away. Another wave comes, and then it catches your attention and stays there for a while; then it passes away again. This is your life. You exist here. You are now here. How do you know that? Who tells you? How can you prove that some other spirit has not entered into your body and is not sitting for you? Can you prove it? Try it. What would be your standard of proof? Your standard of proof would be your *knowledge*. If you are conscious of sitting there then you know that you are sitting there. Do you need any other proof outside of your knowledge? No, it is sufficient. You do not require somebody else to convince you that you are sitting here; do you? No. That proof is enough for you. If the whole world says that you are not sitting there, but a ghost is sitting in your place, you would not believe it. Why? Because you know better. You are conscious. So, it is the only reality which is worth having. Everything that exists in relation to you is secondary. First, you exist; then something else outside of you exists; but if you doubt your existence which is the primary condition of our knowledge, then everything else falls to pieces. Just think of that for a moment, whether it is true or

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not. Whatever I am telling you is absolute Truth. There is no question about it, because it is the final analysis in both the psychological and philosophical studies, that your real existence is one with your knowledge. You cannot separate it. Try to separate your existence from knowledge. Can you exist without knowing that you are existing? No, you cannot. No matter where you go, if your body is taken away and you are in the astral plane or if you are in the spirit form, you must know that you are there; but that body is gone, you must know that. When you went to sleep and did not know it, still you existed. So long as you know that you are sleeping, or after waking up you know that you slept so long and did not know anything of the outside world, still then you existed. And that is the third state of our existence. First is the waking state (*jâgrat*); then would come the dream state (*svapna*); and then would come the dreamless sleep state (*susupti*).¹ In the waking state, all these vibrations of ether (light) and the vibrations of air which make sound are coming and going in a current, like a stream, into our brain, and we are receiving these sensations, and then we are trying to

1. These are the three states of our consciousness (or mind) which are experienced by the same existence (*sattâ* or *sat*) that is the *Atman*. The existence or the *Atman* as witness (*sâksi*) is always distinct from these three states (witnessed).—Vide *Mândukya Upanishad*, 6; and the *Kârikâ*, VI, 1.

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trace the cause of these sensations through our *percepts* and *concepts*, and then we locate the cause outside of us, and if there be any colour we see from the flower, we say that is the cause of this particular sensation of colour; so we say the flower is red or blue or yellow. But what is there in the flower? Nothing but a certain vibration of ether which is around the flower and which produced that particular sensation in our brain which we call colour.¹ And then we say that the flower has that particular colour, but, in reality, the flower has not. There is a certain state of vibration.

1. The *colour* is a sensation produced in eye by the rays of decomposed light in vibrations. Prof. Woodworth informs us that colour-tone depends on the wave length of the light stimulus. Light again varies in amount of mixture of different wave lengths. Light varies also in intensity or energy. "The stimulus entering the eye from any point can vary, then, in three ways: in wave length, in energy, and in amount of mixture; * * To the energy or intensity of the stimulus corresponds the *brightness* of the visual sensation. * * To the wave length of the stimulus corresponds the *colour-tone* of the visual sensation. The colour-tone series extends from red through yellow and the other colours of the spectrum to violet and then by way of the purples back to red again. It is a circular series."

At the red end of the spectrum, the wave length of the light is 760 millionths of a millimeter, and at the violet end it is 390 millionths. In between are waves of every intermediate length, appearing to the eye as orange, yellow, green and blue, with all their transitional hues. A wave length of 600 gives yellow, one of 500 gives green, one of 470 gives blue, etc.—*Psychology*, pp. 366-367, 365.

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Now, our ears can hear the sounds within the range between, say, thirty and forty thousand vibrations in a second. Below and above that range there may be sounds but we do not hear.¹ Nature must have produced other organs besides human ears of other individuals or other beings who might be hearing great noises in that state which we call absolute silence. And if our ears are quickened, perhaps

1. Professors Drummond and Mellone say: "To excite a sensation of sound at all, a certain number of vibrations must occur in a given interval of time. The lower limit is about 25 vibrations per second, and the upper limit about 20,000. Below 25, we should not hear the vibrations but feel them as puffs of wind. At the upper limit, however, people differ very much, both individually and at different ages. * * For musical purposes only a comparatively small portion of this range can be used with advantage,—from about 40 to about 4,000 vibrations per second, covering thus from 6 to 7 octaves."

"Prof. R. M. Ogden quotes * * Sensibility to tones in the higher range of pitch gradually decreases with age. Thus Gildenmeister found that children could hear tones of 20,000 v. d. (*i.e.*, complete vibrations per second); but persons in the middle thirties rarely heard a tone above 15,000 v. d.; while at the age of fifty the upper limit had been reduced to 13,000 v. d."—*Elements of Psychology*, pp. 294-295, 298.

Prof. Woodworth says: "The deepest audible tones have a vibration rate of about 20 per second, and the highest a rate of about 20,000. Outside these limits, there are plenty of physical sounds, but they arouse no auditory sensation * * A tiny whistle gives out 30,000; 50,000 or more vibrations per second, and these can be heard by some animals but not by the human ear."—*Psychology*, pp. 405-406.

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we would be able to hear sounds where ordinary ears would not be able to hear. Perhaps those who are clairaudient would be able to hear the finer sounds that are going on in absolute silence, but ordinary persons cannot hear. So, these vibrations are constantly running in a stream through our nerves into the brain, and we are receiving these sensations in our waking state, and this is the one state of existence.

Then in the dream state our mind apparently becomes separated from the connection with the sense organs, partially separated, not absolutely. It is separated to a certain extent from the brain. We do not hear any sound. We do not receive any sensation of light or smell or touch at the time when we are sleeping; but, of course, in that sleep state there is a gradual going from the waking state to the climax of sleep. There is gradation. We go to sleep slowly. We do not fall instantly into sleep. We enter into a kind of oblivion as it were, and this state remains for sometime, and in that state, perhaps when the mind is not completely resting, we see dreams; and these are caused by the impressions that we have gathered from our waking state, the impressions of various sensations that are left in the brain and in our subconscious mind. These impressions remain dormant. They are all pigeon-holed. When you see a horse, the impression of a horse is in your mind. When you hear any sound, it is all stamped as it were. The ethereal particles of the mind substance are stamped

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every time we receive an impression of sensation. Then sensation begins. Now, memory is that power by which the mind brings out those dormant sensations above the threshold of our consciousness. These dormant impressions exist below our plane of consciousness. From there they rise. The mind which works in the dream state has the creative power. It can create a new form, like a new symbol, over the material that is all pigeon-holed in the form of impressions. For instance, you may see in the dream state half man and half horse, a man with a horse's body but the head and neck is like that of a man. The mind has created that form. You will notice that half of the man's form is put upon half of the horse's form, and the man has created a new figure. This is an illustration; but you will find that there are a great many images that you see in your dreams made up in that way, and you have a certain impression of a certain thing, and that is put in a grotesque manner by the creative power of your mind, as a cartoonist might make up a new figure. Always it has some purpose, and all dreams have some meaning, which we may not know at first or which may not be interpreted properly by ordinary minds; but they are all symbolic. Those who see visions, which are like dreams, will explain them properly if they can interpret correctly, the lines and vibrations, the forms and the colours; but if the perceiver cannot interpret correctly, then he would not be able to explain anything. It requires a great deal of experience

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and test conditions by which one can be exact and can interpret correctly. Ordinary persons who make mistakes might be psychic, but their interpretation is not correct, because their reasoning faculty is not developed enough. They have not analyzed and have not discovered the correlations between the signs or symbols which they saw in their visions and the real things to which they refer, and, for that reason, many psychics would make mistakes. They may not be fraudulent. They might be in right earnest, and they might be honest, but still they are apt to make mistakes. So, when you go to a psychic and find that the symbols or prognostications that have been given about you, are not correct, there the psychic perhaps is not able to interpret them correctly. He might have the impressions all right. So, in that dream state, we see the results of these various combinations of the impressions that we have received during our waking state. There are some dreams, however, which bring us in close touch with the spiritual world. For instance, you may dream that your father or your mother or your friend or your lover who has passed away, has come to you and is giving you a message. Such dreams happen. They might be real. Perhaps, your friend or relative, whoever he may be, has really come to you and has given you the message while you are sleeping, because while you are sleeping you are away from this world. That is, your minds, your egos, are away from this world, which is lighted by

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the sun. The spirits do not like the sunlight, because it is too bright; the vibrations of light are not agreeable to them, as the vibration of the spirit world is different. When we withdraw ourselves from the sunlight world and go into our innermost being, we can reach the spirits in that state more quickly than in our waking state. For that reason, this state of existence may be one of the conditions under which we can come in touch with the spirit world and receive communications. You know those who receive communications from the spirit world, go into a sleep or semi-conscious state. They do not see the external objects even when their eyes are open, but they withdraw their minds from the external sense organs and go inside, and there comes a kind of screen or a veil that drops, and it is a misty or hazy kind of screen that appears in front, but in that hazy screen the perceiver might be able to notice the particular individuals like shadows. Just as you are sitting now, and if I have that screen before me, I would not recognize you at all, but I would see figures just like shadows in front of me, and I would be able to go through your body and come in touch with your mental states, and perhaps, I would be able to read your thoughts, because your thoughts have these forms. Thoughts have forms, and perhaps I would be able to read them correctly if I have previous experience, and then I would be able to know exactly what you are thinking.

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Thoughts can be photographed. If you hold a sensitive plate in front of your forehead, and if you are allowed to think of a particular thought or image, that image will be photographed on that sensitive plate. These experiments have been made, and they are all psychic experiments.

That will show that in our dream state sometimes we come in touch with real things. They might not be real in our waking state, but they are real so long as we are dreaming. Sometimes, however, the results of our dreams or communications with our friends can be remembered even in our waking state if they are very impressive and if they are of great importance. Then we do not forget them.

But as in the dream state all the waking state experiences vanish and appear as unreal and the dream state experiences appear as real; so, in our waking state all the dreams appear to be unreal and whatever we perceive with our senses seem to be real. This reality is *conditional* reality. But the existence that I have described in the beginning, is unconditioned Absolute Existence, which is not limited by time or space and not subject to the *law of causation*. All these particular experiences that we are having in our waking states, we call them realities; they are conditional realities; that is, they exist in time and space and are subject to the *law of causation*. They last only for a while like dreams.

The other state of existence is the dreamless sleep state (*suṣupti*). There we enter when we are in sound

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sleep and we do not dream at all.¹ The mind rests there. There is the causal body, and that mind goes to its causal state. It has no particular form, but it is like a nucleus of finer particles of matter, something like electrons, which receive the impressions, ethereal impressions of the mind, and the different forces or powers of the mind remain latent. They are in a seed form, and yet there is that existence. We do not become non-existent, although our body does not exist in relation to us when we are sleeping soundly, although we may not have any dreams, still we exist. What is the proof of our existence? We do not become absolutely unconscious. Because when we wake up we remember that we had a fine sleep when we did not have any dream at all. We are conscious of that void, of not having any dream or any disturbance of any kind; consciousness of that particular state of existence remains, and, therefore, we as individuals who had that consciousness, existed. So, you see, our *existence* is not disturbed by the change of the states of existence. That is, neither the waking state nor the dream state does disturb it. And even in that dreamless sleep we still exist. So, that existence is a continuous thing. It is not that there is any break in this flow of existence. It is indestructible and you cannot separate one existence

1. "*Yatra supto na kanchana kâmam kâmayate, no kanchana svapnam pasyati; tat susuplam.*"—Mândukya Upanishad, 5.

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from another. From this waking state you go into the dream state and then into the dreamless sleep state, and then you wake up, and it is inseparable, and this indivisible existence is the real individuality, because the word *individuality* means that which cannot be divided by the waking or the dream or the dreamless sleep state; it is unbroken and continuous.¹ So, even after death, you remain as a spirit, that is an unbroken existence. The body is gone because that which has had birth must die. The gross physical body is taken away. There may be a phenomenal, ethereal body. That might be taken away too. But those are only the appearances of the real existence, and there is a continuity of life existence. Existence can never become non-existence. It is said in the Bhagavad Gîtâ : *Nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate satah,*” i.e. existence can never become non-existence, and that which does not exist can never exist. That will give you the proof that a chair as a chair does not exist, but the existence of chair is the reality. Try to differentiate that. Chair, that is its name and form, does not exist. It is a delusion. It exists as a

1. This unbroken ‘continuity’ implies an existence which is eternal, changeless and indestructible. It enjoys the three states : *jāgrat*, *svapna* and *susupti*, but is never disturbed by those states; it remains always unaffected, indeterminate and unconditioned. The Mândukya Upanishad (*Kârikâ*, 1.5) says : “*Trisu dhâmasu ytd bhojyam yascha prakîrtitaha; vedaitadubhayam yastu so bhunjâno na lipyate.*”

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vibratory state so long as we look at it, because we can never perceive that chair otherwise. If we analyze that *perception* we can only receive a reflection of the light falling on the chair, which produces an inverted image upon the retinae, and that is carried by the optic nerve into the grey matter of the brain. and there it becomes a *sensation*.¹ Where did you see the chair? How can you see it? Handling is a feeling of thickness or smoothness or roughness. The colour is only that which you can see with your eyes; and that feeling of solidity comes from touch; and it is the combination of these qualities that we perceive with our senses which appears to be a chair; but where did you see the chair? You did not see the chair. You simply felt these qualities that exist, and you trace the cause of these sensible qualities outside of you and call it the chair; but the chair as

1. The terms *sensation* and *perception* are again "names for different cognitive functions" as says Prof. William James; but, in fact, they are "not for different sorts of mental fact." (*Vide James: Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 1.). Professors Drummond and Mellone inform us: "The fundamental process in our apprehension of the material world present to us is called *Perception*; and *Perception*, in the simplest form in which we experience it, is called *Sensation*. * * *Sensation* * differs from *Perception* only in the comparative simplicity of its content. * * *Sensations* arise normally when a sense-organ is stimulated so as to give rise to nervous impulses propagated to the brain, and only when these have reached some part of the cortex does any kind of sensation arise." (Italics ours).—*Elements of Psychology*, pp. 273—274.

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a chair never exists in relation to you. You could never see it. So is the external world. The sun, moon and stars never exist. Shut your eyes; the sun might rise and set for ever, it does not matter to you. It does not exist in relation to you. Then it exists in relation to those who are waking, but you never see the sun. There might be a sun outside of our impression of the sun. The sun appears to us like a small disc. Is it like a small disc? It is millions of times larger than the earth. ¹ How can you see such a big thing? You do not see the sun. You see only the image, or just like a small disc, something as you see in a dream. In reality these things do not affect us all, only we give reality to them because of our own reality. The chair is real so long as you are sitting on it. If you were unreal, if a ghost were sitting in your place, then the chair would not exist. So, the existence, which is the Eternal Existence, is called in Vedānta *Brahman*, and it is the Absolute Truth.

The advanced lesson in psychology will lead us to the highest realization of our true being; not only

1. Dr. Jeans says: “* the sun is not only about 400 times (92,900,000 miles) as distant as the moon, but is also 400 times big. Its diameter is about 400 times the moon’s diameter, or 109 times the earth’s diameter, or 864,000 miles. This of course means that the sun is 109 times as big in each direction as the earth—in length, and breadth, and height. As a consequence no fewer than 1,300,000 earths could be packed inside the sun.”—*The Stars in Their Courses*, p. 19.

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of our true being, but of the reality of the universe, and it will lead us to the knowledge of Truth. The realization of Truth will come to us when we have transcended these three states of existence.

There is a fourth state, and that fourth state of existence is very difficult to understand. It is like the third yet it is not the same. There is a resemblance of the dreamless sleep with the fourth state (*turiya*). The fourth state in which all these, the waking and the dreaming and the dreamless sleep state, would not appear as real. They would all appear as dreams, as *delusions*, which never existed. Now, that state is the state of realization. If you can once enter into that state you will never forget that these things never existed in relation to you; they never can exist. It is all like a delusion. You could not have a body, wife or children, because these are all in the realm of names, forms and appearances. So, the apparent reality (*prâtitika* or *prâti-bhâsika sattâ*) is on the sense plane, and the Absolute Reality (*pâramârthika sattâ*) is beyond time and space, beyond our thoughts, and when you go beyond your thoughts there is the realm of the Infinite, and there you come in touch with the Infinite and become one with the Infinite. So, these states of consciousness when properly understood, will help us to understand our relation to the Infinite or Infinite Existence, which is beyond time, beyond space, beyond causality; and which is the Absolute.

CHAPTER VIII

OUR RELATION TO THE ABSOLUTE

The subject for this lecture is : *Our Relation to the Absolute*. A clear understanding of man's relation to the Absolute is a matter of momentous importance to all the students of philosophy and religion, as well as to the seekers after Truth. From ancient times all philosophers have tried to explain this relation and have arrived at different conclusions, and out of these conclusions various systems of philosophy and religion have been built up.

But when we study the different scriptures of the world, we do not find any mention of the Absolute; we hear and read about the personal God. Is the personal God the same as the Absolute, or what is the Absolute? For instance, when we read the Christian Bible, there we find God, the Lord of the universe, the Creator, the Governor and Ruler. All attributes are given to God, but He is not called the Absolute. As if the Absolute is something different from this personal God. Then again, if we study the other scriptures of the world, for instance, the Zend-Avesta of the Persians, the Quran of the Moham-medans, we do not find any mention of the name of the Absolute, unless we regard God as the Absolute.

There are others again who have no conception of

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the Absolute at all. They do not know about it. They do not believe in the existence of God, nor of the soul as the Absolute. They think everything has come through the mechanical process of nature and of finer particles of matter. All such questions regarding our relation to God or to the Absolute are, they consider, merely waste of time and energy. So, such topics should not be discussed. They would rather live in the world and consider it as a Godless world and get all the comforts from the Godless world for the benefit of the soulless body. Their idea is : everything will end after death. As it is with the physical body so with the phenomenal universe. There is no such thing as the Absolute. We cannot think of it. We need not try to think about it. That is one class of thinkers, which may be called under different names, as materialists, agnostics and atheists. And the other class of thinkers can be divided into three classes, the dualists, the qualified non-dualists, and the monists.

The dualistic believers regard that phase of the Absolute which is the Creator, the Ruler, the Governor, and the personal God. They consider that this Creator and the Ruler of the universe, the personal God, is all in all. He creates this universe out of nothing. He creates human beings out of nothing ; fashions everything, gives name to everything and governs everything afterwards. He is outside of us, outside of the universe. He is beyond nature, beyond our reach and beyond our thought. We are nothing

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but His creatures. And some of these believers give human attributes to Him and regard Him as a human being, with attributes infinitely magnified. Others again regard Him with a form. They consider that this personal God, the Creator and the Governor of the universe, has a form like that of a man. We find that as described in the Genesis, in the garden of Eden: The Lord God walked. He had a voice. Adam heard the voice of the Lord, and he hid himself behind the bushes, behind the trees, so that the Lord might not see him. Then we find also that the elders of Israel, Korah, Dathan, Abiram and seventy of the elders of Israel saw Him. Moses saw Jehovah's back. Jehovah ate under the oaks at Mamre. He was pleased with the sweet flavour of sacrifice. Jehovah had human qualities, human attributes, just like any one of us, only our imperfections are not given to this personal God. He sits on a throne, with a right hand and a left hand. He punishes the wicked with eternal fire. Our relation to such aspects of the Absolute is like that of a creature to the Creator, like that of a subject to the governor, of a slave to his master. As a slave must be obedient to the master, he must perform his duties and obey all the commands of the lord, so we must obey all the commands of the heavenly Lord; otherwise He will punish us. That fear of punishment is at the root of all such religious and devotional beliefs and exercises. Why should we live and let others

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live? Because of that fear of punishment. Otherwise, we will be punished. Just as in a state if we violate the laws of the state or the commands of the Governor we will be punished.

This relation exists, you will find, among the Jews, among the Mohammedans as well as among the Christians. If you speak about any other relation with the personal God of them, they would not be able to listen to you. They say : we are His slaves, His servants, His creatures ; we can never approach Him. In the Persian scriptures we also find that Ahura Mazda is sitting on the throne. No one can also approach Him.

Although we find in the Genesis that God created man after His own image, still it is very difficult to understand what that *image* means. Does it mean that our form is the image of the Lord? If the Lord is with a human form, then ordinary minds naturally take it for granted that by *image* is meant our *form*. That we are like the human form of the Almighty Lord, who is the Absolute. But still the relation exists the same, that of a creature to the Creator, that of a servant to his master. You will see that if you try to understand the meaning of the word *image* you will find that Adam was created after the image of God, that is, at first, before his temptation and before his fall, he had some Divine qualities in him, but afterwards he lost them and he became a sinner. He remained no longer the image of God. And since we are born of that same source, we have inherited all the

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sins. So, we have also lost the image of God. And Jesus the Christ was the only-begotten Son of God. He was an exception. He was not born in sin and iniquity. You have learnt that in your Sunday Schools. I do not have to mention these things, but I simply remind you of what you have already learnt. But whether Jesus the Christ ever meant that He was the only-begotten son of God, an exception to all other mortals, is an issue yet to be solved. That question has not been solved. The Christian Churches do not raise that question because it creates a lot of difficulties. And supposing that we are all sons of God, then why should our Heavenly Father punish us with eternal fire, as we read in the parable of the king's son,—the parable of the marriage of the king's son? There it is said that the king ordered his servants to bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him in darkness, where there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth; for 'many are called but few are chosen.' Then again we find in Matthew, when Jesus says: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Such ideas make us rebel against the thought that the Heavenly Father, who is merciful and all-loving, could punish His own children with eternal fire and damnation! These ideas have been taught and preached for centuries, but do they change our conception of God? Do they give us any new explanation of the Absolute and our relation to the Absolute? No, not at all. Whether we have come

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out of nothing or we pre-existed, all these questions are left to us as unsolved as mysteries. We do not know, we cannot understand by reading the scriptures the nature of the soul, its relation to God in reality, whether we shall continue to live and come to this earth or not; it is all mystery to us; to us has been handed down a set of doctrines and dogmas, and we are forced to accept them, whether we like them or not, whether we are helped by them or not; but still we must accept them and take them for granted.

There are other kinds of dualists again who exist in other parts of the world, and they believe that the personal God is extra-cosmic, is outside of nature, but He cannot create something out of nothing. He does not create us out of nothing, but He creates everything from the material of nature. Nature, according to them, is eternal, is co-existent with God. God is eternal. Nature is eternal. And the individual souls are also eternal. These individual souls remain in nature, and at the time of creation the Lord projects them from nature and makes them as animals and human beings. So, this projection of the material which already existed in nature is the meaning of *creation*, according to those other dualists, who live in India and in other parts of the world. According to them, the relation of the individual soul to God is not merely that of a creature to the Creator, not merely that of a slave to his master, but that of a son to his loving father. The Lord does

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not punish His son. He does not punish the wicked. But they (the dualists) answer the question of the punishment and reward by a law, and that law is the *law of causation*, the *law of effect*. Every cause must produce an effect, and this *law of causation*, or the *law of action and reaction*, binds all human beings. We cannot escape that law. If we do anything wicked, by the *law of action and reaction* the result comes back to us, and we reap the consequence. For instance, if I put my finger into the fire, the fire will burn it. And that action of putting the finger into the fire brings a reaction of burning and I suffer. So, every wicked act produces suffering as its natural result. So, there is no necessity of believing in a devil or in a Satan or a creator of evil; and naturally there is no such place for eternal damnation, for eternal hell-fire. But there is a kind of darkness where the wicked souls grope. They do not realize after death where they are and cannot see their path. They are ignorant. They do not see what is going to happen, just as in this world you will find many people who are groping in the darkness of ignorance. They do not see anything. They cannot see.¹ Their eyes are closed as it were. Their sight is very narrow and very short. They will plunge into a certain kind of work without thinking of the consequences, and that is the condition of what we call 'hell.' We are all living in hell if we are

1. Vide Swâmi Abhedântda : *Life Beyond Death*, pp. 234, 238, 257-258.

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living in darkness, even in this life. Suppose, a man who lived in darkness in this world, did not understand any of the laws. He made mistakes all through his life, like an ignoramus. When he passed out beyond the grave, do you think he would be suddenly changed into an angel, an all-knowing being? Not indeed. Because he will continue to remain in the same condition. A man who commits suicide, will not be able to know where he is after death. Everything will be in confusion. Everything will be in darkness. He has violated certain laws and he has produced the effects upon himself. What has the Lord to do with it? Where is the necessity there of a devil or a creator of evil?

So, these dualists who live in India and who believe in a personal God but not in a devil, have understood some of the laws that govern our soul life, and those who believe in a creator of evil have personified some aspect of that law and have learnt to fear that personified evil. That is only an imagination. There is no personification of evil outside of our own minds.

On the other hand, the souls that perform good deeds, enjoy happiness, health, prosperity, longevity, and all the pleasures of life. But a man who is born with evil tendencies, has brought them with him from his past incarnation. The souls have not been created suddenly, but these souls are passing through the different stages of evolution, from the lower to the higher planes, gaining experience after ex-

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perience, and marching onward towards the ultimate goal of the realization of the Absolute. The realization of the Absolute is the goal of all. We do not know now what the Absolute is, but some day our eyes will be opened. Some day we shall be able to see things in a different light, and some day we shall be able to understand the laws which govern our lives. At present we do not know them. For that reason, our evolution has not come to an end. We are evolving, progressing every day, until we reach that state, that goal, which is the ideal. Before we understand what the Absolute is, we must pass through the different stages of evolution in our spiritual progress. First of all, we shall start from the gross physical body, and its relation to the universe. Then gradually from the surface we shall go inward towards the centre, step by step. If we have a conception of God who is personal, extra-cosmic, who is the Creator of something out of nothing, we shall gradually come to a plane where we shall be able to remove all those misunderstandings, misconceptions, and analyze the nature of God, analyze the nature of attributes which we give to God, and then find out the ultimate Truth which underlies all these conceptions. We are worshipping at present a human God which has been created by the human mind. The real God is far away. When we kneel down to a personal God, we make a mental picture, and that mental picture is a creation of our own mind. When you think, for instance, of Christ you will

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have to make a mental picture of Christ; you have seen perhaps a painting or some statue, and you form a mental picture that agrees, that looks like that. That mental picture is of your own mind. The real Christ is far away. Some artists have painted Christ with golden hair and blue eyes. Perhaps Christ never had golden hair and blue eyes. He was born in Asia. He was an Asiatic. He was born with dark hair and dark eyes. So, you may imagine that he was just like one of you, with golden hair and blue eyes and white figure, but that is your mental picture. You have created that in your mind, and you are kneeling down and praying to that picture.

Similarly, when you think of Jehovah or any other name of a personal God, you repeat His name, you make a mental picture, perhaps of a gigantic figure, with enormous strength, power and great knowledge, and all-seeing eyes; but these are all conceptions of our own minds. So, when we are trying to search what the true nature of the Absolute is, we have to go beyond such conceptions. Such conceptions are only the steps toward the realization of the Absolute.

Therefore, the conception of the personal God is the first step. Then after that we rise still higher and we get into another state which is deeper and which is grander than the conception of an extra-cosmic personal God who is sitting above the clouds. That is called the qualified non-dualistic conception of

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God. God is not separate from nature, but He dwells in nature. He is not far away, but He is near, dwelling in everything. He is not the Ruler from the outside of nature, but He is ruling from inside, just as there is a soul which is the ruler of the body. It is dwelling in the body and yet it is the ruler; so the Lord of the universe is dwelling in nature, yet He is the Ruler of the nature. He dwells in every atom. He is in the solar system, in the sun, moon and stars, in the earth, in our body, in the table, in the chair, and everywhere. He is omnipresent, and all the forces of nature are but the expressions of His will. His mind is like the sum total of our individual minds, that is Cosmic mind. His will is the sum total of the individual wills. He has infinite eyes. He sees through all eyes. He hears through all ears. He thinks through all brains. He works through all hands. We are part and parcel of that one Universal Being. He is the one stupendous Whole.¹ In Him we live. Through Him we exist. Without Him there can be nothing. That conception is harmonizing God and the world. That is more universal than that of personal God. It is not only more universal, but it is more practical. We have got a religion that will help us to live the ideal life in Godconsciousness, and that ideal life of Godconsciousness cannot be

1. "*Sahasrasîrsâ purusaha sahasrâksaha sahasrapât
Sa bhumim visvato vritvâtytisthâ dsângulam.*"
—Rik, X, 90. 1.

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realized if we know that God is far away from us, that we cannot reach Him. But, on the contrary, if we know that God is dwelling in us, we live and move and have our beings in God, then we can understand that all the works that we are doing are not our own actions, but we are guided by a supreme Will, by a Divine power, which is the Ruler and Governor of everything. He does not create something out of nothing, as the dualistic believers describe Him. He is not merely the efficient cause of the universe, but He is both the efficient and the material cause (*nimitta* and *upâdâna kâraṇa*) of the universe. He is our very nature and nature is His body. Nature is nothing but the Divine Energy which forms His body. His physical body is the gross phenomenal universe which we perceive with our senses, and He is the soul of the universe. His mind is the Cosmic mind, the sum total of all our minds, and our relation to the Cosmic mind is like the relation that exists between the eddies and the eternal current of the Cosmic mind. Our minds are like so many eddies, so many whirlpools, in the eternal current of the Cosmic mind, that is running and flowing from eternity to eternity. Our individual wills are like the rays of the sun, and the Divine will contains all these rays. That is, all the rays of individual wills emanate from that one source like the rays of the sun which emanate from that self-effulgent, luminous and heavenly body. We can-

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not be away from Him. We are living in Him. So, when we do anything, when we walk on the streets or perform any action, if we think that God is dwelling in us and we are like His instruments, that these instruments of human bodies are guided and governed by the Divine will, then we cannot do anything wicked, anything wrong. It would be impossible for us to commit any wrong or wicked act, because we shall be conscious of the omnipresent Divine Being that can never commit anything wrong. And that consciousness is *more real* to us than our present consciousness, because the present consciousness of our individual self is separate from another such consciousness, separate from the universe. We are living only for our individual body, and everything that is related to the individual body, and that consciousness is very narrow and very limited. It cannot bring any happiness to us. This consciousness of the individual self which is accepted as separated from the rest of the Universal is the result of ignorance and self-delusion. We cannot exist in this universe being separated from each other and from the universe.

Now, think of our present existence. It is a relative existence. That is, our existence depends upon the existence of everything else. For instance, you are sitting here. The very existence of yourself in this room depends upon the existence of the room, and this room again cannot exist if there be no city of Los Angeles, and the city of Los Angeles cannot exist if

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there be no United States, and the United States cannot exist if there be no earth, and the earth cannot exist if there be no sun, no solar system, and the sun cannot exist if there be no other systems around which this whole solar system is moving. So you see, our present existence is so intimately related with the rest of the universe that when we try to separate our existence from the rest of the universe, we delude ourselves; we commit a great mistake, a great error. But, on the contrary, if we think that our consciousness depends upon the whole universe, that is, if we try to realize that our individual consciousness is a consciousness of only one part, then we see that that part is closely related to the other parts, and ultimately to the stupendous Whole, which is the Absolute.

So, we must not live for ourselves, but we must live for the rest of the universe. We are here to help in the onward progress, not only of our own individual self, but of the whole humanity, of the whole race and of all living things. We must not stop simply after doing something that will help our own people, our own nation, but we must go on doing things that will help not only our own nation but all nations, not only all human beings but all living creatures, lower animals, even plants. So, the life of a great Saviour is for humanity and for more than humanity, for the lower animals, for the whole creation. Each individual must learn that One Truth, that we are the servants of all creation, not servant of a particular

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nation. Philanthropy is narrow when compared to the service of the creation. And that is our ideal. The moment we realize our relation with the Absolute, we cannot live within the limitations of our selfish motives, selfish ideas and individual consciousness. We must transcend all these, and that is the purpose of religion.

You have been taught religion which is a set of dogmas and doctrines, and which you will have to believe. But what about your life? How would you live? You must learn to live in and through the Absolute, because if the Absolute is the one stupendous Whole, then how can parts exist independent of the Whole? It would be an impossibility. And for that reason the Vedânta philosophy tells us : 'Try to seek the Absolute first.' And the Absolute is described in the *Upanishads*, the oldest scriptures of the world :

*"Yato vâ imâni bhutâni jâyante, yena jâtâni jivanti, yat prayantya-bhi-samvisanti; tat vijijñâsava, tat Brahmeti."*¹

The Absolute is that from which all animate and inanimate objects have come into existence, in which they live and unto which they return at the time of dissolution. Know it; it is the *Brahman*. That is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and end of this phenomenal world. We have come from the Absolute and we are going back to the Absolute. If

1. *Taittiriya Upanishad*, III. I.

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the whole phenomenal universe be destroyed, if the earth is suddenly changed into a nebulous mass by coming in contact with some other planet or with a comet, then where shall we be? We shall go back to the causal state. We shall remain there. Nothing will be lost. There is no such thing as destruction of anything. Destruction means reversion to the causal state.¹ You can never be destroyed. Your body might be dissolved might disintegrate, might go into its original elementary conditions, but from those elementary conditions other forms will rise and they will continue to live. After the dissolution of this earth, of that matter, which will remain as a new world, will be created, perhaps a new earth and a new solar system and new planets will be framed; and that is the process. So, in this eternal process we are living. It is the play of the Absolute, and in this play of the Absolute we have lost our bearings. We do not know where we are, what we are doing. We are following like children, as the children play in the streets 'blind-man's-buff.' They shut their eyes and play the part of a blind man, without knowing anything and without seeing anything. So, we are playing the part of ignorant people, because we have no better sense. And we need better sense now. And it is the light of religion that opens our sight and enables us to see the things *as they are in reality*. And that religion is not confined to books. Books

1. "*Nâsaha Kâranalayah*." —Sânkhya-sutra, I. 119.

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do not give any religion. It is the *feeling*. It is the Realization, the Divine realization. The *Realization* does not mean a mere intellectual apprehension of the thought of the *ideal*, but you will have to bring that *ideal* to and harmonize that ideal with your daily life. If you can do that then you are able to feel the presence of Divinity in you. Then your present consciousness will be transformed into a higher consciousness which we call God-consciousness, the consciousness of the Absolute, and that consciousness of the Absolute *means* that you will feel the omnipresence of the unchangeable Reality of the universe. The unchangeable Reality of the universe cannot be *many*. It is *one*. It is beyond time and space. It is omnipresent. It is Infinite. It cannot be divided into parts. But at present we feel that we are the parts of the Whole; that is the qualified non-dualistic conception. That is, God is qualified by matter and by individual souls. Individual souls form a part of the whole Being.

I will give you an illustration. Our individual body is composed of minute cells, and each cell has its individuality. Each cell in body has its mind, has its memory, has a little consciousness, and myriads of such cells make up our self-consciousness, make up our mind. Now, we are like these minute cells in the cosmic body of the Lord. We cannot exist being separated from His body, we shall be dead. Yet we are playing our parts and helping towards the expression of the Divine will that is at the centre. In that

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way we can find our relation to the Absolute. If the centre is the Absolute, then we are related as parts of the centre. Then when we think of the Absolute, time and space will vanish. There will be no more time, no more space. Time and space, exist in relation to our thoughts. It is the *mode* of our thoughts, of our conscious life. What is time? It means *succession*. One thought rises in your mind, and another follows, and the conception of interval between these two thoughts is *time*. Take the sunrise as one thought and the sunset as another, and the interval between these two thoughts is time. Divide it into twelve parts, that would be an hour. In that way we have got the conception of time. Time cannot exist if you have no thoughts. Suppose, you can make your mind absolutely free from thought, you will rise above time. Five hours may appear to you as five seconds. If you go into that state which is beyond the thought realm and sit there for a while, look at the clock or watch when you sit there, then after you wake up you look again, and in your consciousness you will feel that it was just like five seconds, but in reality you have been sitting there for hours according to the watch. So, that will prove to you that you can rise above time and yet remain conscious.

Space will not exist either, because space means *co-existence*. When two ideas rise simultaneously, that which separates them is what we call *space*. For instance, suppose you are looking at the sun from the

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earth. If you think of yourself and the sun at the same time, that which intervenes between and keeps apart these two ideas, is the *space*. So, time and space are the conditions under which all phenomena can exist. They are the *forms* of sensibility or appearances, or as Kant says, the forms of intuition.¹ But when we go toward the Absolute, we realize that in the realm of the Absolute there is no phenomenon, there is no time, no space, and consequently, the *law of causation* does not work there.

1. Kant says about space in his *Critique of Pure Reason*: "Space is therefore regarded as a condition of the possibility of phenomena, not as a determination produced by them; it is a representation *a priori* which necessarily precedes all external phenomena." And about *time* he says: "Time is therefore simply a subjective condition of our (human) intuition (which is always sensuous, that is so far as we are affected by objects), but by itself, apart from the subject, nothing."—*Max Müller's Translation*, pp. 19, 28.

Space and *time* are regarded by Kant as the forms of appearances and the content of pure intuition. Prof. Paton comments: "As forms of all appearances space and time are known to be necessary and universal. Hence we may say that our ideas of space and time are *a priori* or pure—they cannot be dependent on experience or sense-perception, which can never give us strict universality or necessity. * * This implies further that the *content* of our ideas, namely space and time themselves, are due to the nature of our sensibility. They are forms under which alone we can sense appearances, and are necessarily imposed on appearances by the nature of our sensibility. This doctrine is expressed in the statement that space and time are *forms of sensibility*."—*Kant's Metaphysic of Experience*, Vol. I, p. 102.

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We transcend then the *law of causality*. These are the conditions of the relative world. We must know that we are living in the relative world, and everything that we perceive with our senses has a relative existence, a conditional existence; but that which is unconditioned, is beyond the relative, is the Absolute. Take, for instance, the conception of a Creator. Can He be the Absolute? No, He is relative. Because a Creator requires to be related to the creation. If the creation is taken away from Him, He is no longer the Creator. It is a name, a name that is related to the created object, and that relation makes a Creator what He is. So, the Creator of the universe or God is not the Absolute Being, or *Brahman*. He is relative. He is a part of the phenomena, and, therefore, He is the first-born Lord of the universe. He is the first manifestation of the Absolute.¹ The Absolute projects out of Its own body the first-born Lord or *Isvara*, projects this Cosmic consciousness, or the

1. The First-born Lord God is the first manifestation of the Absolute. According to Vedânta the Absolute is the supra-temporal and supra-spatial Reality, *i.e.*, it transcends the categories of time, space and causation. It is called the *Turiya* or the fourth in relation to the three others (*Isvara*, *Hiranyagarbha* and *Virâta*). The *Isvara* is also called the *Avyakta* (*Prakriti* and *Prajñâ*). The *Avyakta* is the state of dreamless sleep or *susupti*. It is the unmodified, undifferentiated and unmanifested cause of projection or appearance. The appearance or nescience lies there in a dormant or causal state, and so it is called the causal (*kârana*) *Brahman*. The *Isvara* wills to be the *many* and His divine Will or contemplation becomes crystalized into appearance or the world.

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Cosmic Ego, which becomes the Creator, the *prime-mover* of evolution. And matter again comes out of the same Absolute.

The whole universe is a gigantic magnet. Its one pole is the Cosmic matter, and the other pole is the Cosmic mind. Cosmic matter is the negative pole and Cosmic mind is the positive pole of that magnet and the neutral point is the Absolute, or *Brahman*, which is neither mind nor matter, yet the cause of both. It is sometimes called the causeless Cause. But even that term *cause* is a relative term. The term *cause* can be applied to a thing only when it is related to the effect, so causeless cause or uncaused cause is an anomalous term. It does not refer to the Absolute. The Absolute cannot be expressed by words as it is beyond speech and beyond thought : '*Avàmmānaso'gocharam*'; both words and thought cannot reach the Absolute. It is beyond our thought and beyond our conception. So, personal God is not the Absolute. It is a phase or the expression of the Absolute expression through the force of nature, and that expression will last so long as the objects to which that expression is related, will last. So, if all the phenomenal world would vanish there would be no more necessity of a Creator or a personal God. Therefore, the monistic thinkers, who are the sincere and earnest seekers after the Absolute, do not stop in dualism, do not stop in qualified non-dualism, but they want to go deeper and still further and try to find out the Absolute

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Truth, which is beyond all changes and beyond all relations. When they once discover this Absolute Truth, they find it is the eternal Consciousness, Existence and Intelligence. There is no manifestation. It is beyond all manifestations. And that idea is beautifully described in the Rig Veda : “*Nâsadâsînno sadâsittadânîm, nâsîd rajo no vyomo paro yat.*”¹ ‘Before the beginning of evolution there was neither *entity* nor *non-entity*.’ Now, here you notice each word, *entity* or *non-entity*. They are two relative terms. If one exists it presupposes the existence of the other, and, therefore, it would be a relative thing. So, when they are describing the Absolute, they must describe in paradoxes. That is *something* which is neither *this* nor *that*. There is *something*, yet it is the cause of both. There was neither *entity* nor *non-entity* (*‘nâsadâsînno sadâsît’*), neither death nor birth nor immortality (*no mrityu râsidadamritam na’*). Now, *immortality* is a term relative to death. So, the Absolute cannot be called immortal or mortal, because if you call it immortal there must be something that is mortal. If you call it mortal, there would be something that would mean death ; but in the Absolute there is only one existence. It is neither *one* nor *many*. There is neither space nor anything that exists in space ; and that is the one Being, the one Reality ; yet it contains everything. It holds us all there. We can-

1. Rik : *Nâsadiya-Sukta*.

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not get away, and nothing can exist outside of it. All these phenomena are nothing but dreams. They are like waves in that Eternal ocean. Individual souls are like so many bubbles. As a bubble would rise on the surface of the ocean, meet other bubbles, remain together for a while, move on together for a while, and ultimately go down again into the ocean without losing its individuality, because its individuality depends upon the individuality of the ocean, so these individual souls are rising in that ocean of the Absolute like bubbles, like waves. We think that these are our friends, this is our country, this is our relative and those are our enemies. All these are *delusions*. Each one of us is like a bubble in that ocean. Why do we differentiate? Because we do not understand our relation to the ocean. But when we understand the relation of the bubble to the ocean, the relation of the wave to the ocean, then we understand our relation to the Absolute. We are living in the ocean of the Infinite. Our existence is a part of the Infinite Existence. Our life-force is a part of the Infinite Life-force, and everything that belongs to us, in reality, does not belong to us. It belongs to the universe. We simply make mistakes and suffer on account of our mistakes; and a philosophy which is a true philosophy, will help us in getting out of this dark abyss of ignorance and show us the light, so that we can live in this world without suffering, without reaping the consequences

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of the works that we perform through ignorance and selfishness, but enjoying the life and reaping the happiness, pleasure, joy, and peace in our hearts. If we cannot live in happiness, in peace, and in knowledge, our life is not worth living. Why should we do all these things that make us suffer? We are not here to suffer. There is no other devil stronger than the devil of darkness of ignorance. It is the ignorance that makes us selfish, that makes us understand that we are separate from each other; but the light of knowledge will dispel that darkness of ignorance. A room that has held darkness for thousands of years, a cave where darkness has been for thousands of years is instantly illumined by the stroke of a match-stick—the darkness of thousands of years is dispelled. So, says the Vedânta, you strike a match in the cave of your heart, and there you will have the light. You will then understand things as they are in reality. There is no use of running after different things. Nothing can help you unless you have that light within you. If you have not received that light within you, everything will appear as different. It is the consciousness of the Absolute, and that is what we need. And then we shall live the right kind of life. Nothing will be wrong then. Then whether we believe in a God or in scriptures or in dogmas and doctrines, that matters very little. These are non-essentials of religion. *The religion of religions is our knowledge and realization and love.* When that knowledge and

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realization comes, then everything non-essential vanishes; everything disquieting disappears like a dream.

So, the Christian Science has done one good thing in saying that matter does not exist. It is a delusion. It is a delusion in reality, *but mind is also a delusion*. And that is what Vedânta teaches. If matter is a delusion, mind is a delusion too. Discard both and go into the realm of the Absolute. Then the health of the body would not be your ideal, nor prosperity, but you will live in the Absolute without thinking of to-morrow. Christ came to teach that but very few then understood Christ, and very few do understand Christ even now. Christ tried to teach that this world is a delusion, but he lived among people who were too realistic and would not let him express his ideas. He said: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."¹ Why? because the morrow is a delusion. If you are part and parcel of the Absolute everything is provided for you. Why you worry? If you have bad health, remember you have brought it upon yourself. Turn your attention to *something* that is grander, *something* that is nearer the Absolute; you will regain your health. It is our evil thoughts, it is our mental ideas that reflect upon the physical body. Sometimes, of course, we inherit certain diseases, because that is the result of our past bad

1. *St. Matthew*, VI, 34.

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works. We suffer in this life for the works that we have done in our previous lives. We are born of such parents, and with one stone many birds are killed, and that is the most wonderful, mysterious and inscrutable way of this nature. How we suffer, yet we do not blame ourselves ! . But when we open our eyes and understand the law, we think that nothing is mysterious or inscrutable. Everything is governed by law.

The Vedânta tells us to take the whole responsibility on our own shoulders and march onward toward the Absolute. Every individual soul will reach the Absolute sooner or later ; no one will be lost. There is no such thing as *eternal punishment*. There may be temporary punishment. Punishment or reward is a temporary phenomenon. Because everything that is on the relative plane lasts only for a time, exists in time and space, and it must pass away. The only thing that does not pass away is the Absolute, and that Absolute is like the background of all phenomena. It is the *substratum*. It is like the canvas upon which the most beautiful landscape of nature is painted. It is the canvas which gives the life and support to the portrait of a beautiful figure, a beautiful maiden, that is painted by an artist. So, if you take away that canvas, the portrait is gone. So, the Absolute is the background of these individual portraits of human beings that are working and moving here and there. They are like pictures. So, a true seeker after

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the Absolute when he realizes that ocean of God-intuition he does not feel himself different or separated from the Absolute, but he feels that the Absolute is *one* and he is *one* with the Absolute. Then he says : "I am in the sun. I am in the moon. I am in the stars. I am in the wind. I am everywhere. I cannot die. Fire cannot burn me and water cannot moisten me. Air cannot dry me. I am imperishable, immortal, deathless and birthless. I am here manifesting my powers through these individual physical forms, but I live in all individuals. I am the one Spirit." You might feel then that you may not eat with your own mouth, but you are eating with other mouths. You are one with everyone. A soul that has realized that Godconsciousness, feels himself one with the universe. If anyone breaks a branch of a tree it hurts him. If anyone kills an animal it hurts him, because he sees that oneness which produces all animate and inanimate objects. That consciousness will make us rise above this mundane world, above all worldliness, selfishness, and then and then alone we shall realize what Christ meant when He said : "*I and My Father are One.*"

That ideal we must consider as a Reality. Oneness is the relation of the true seeker after the Absolute with the Absolute. There is nothing beyond that. When we have become *one* with the Absolute there is no *other* relation that can be higher than that. Some people may think that we again come down to

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the earth plane to play our parts. That might mean a lower step, not higher than the Absolute. You may indeed come down but never go beyond or cease to be in the Absolute. Imagine a state higher than the Absolute—the Absolute, where there are neither thoughts, nor time, space and causation. But you cannot imagine that; because when you will imagine a state higher than the Absolute, you will have to come down;—you will come down to the realm of thought, *i.e.*, to the realm of time, space and causation. So, is that going beyond the Absolute, or going down to the plane of relativity where reign supreme the limitations of time, space and causation? And truly speaking, there is no longer any *going beyond* the Absolute, or *going down* or *coming back* (*vyutthâna*) from the Absolute by one who has realized It: “*Na sa punarâvartate.*” People who have not realized the true meaning of the word *Absolute* and who have not understood the condition or state of that Realization, talk like that; but Vedânta says:

Bhidyate hridayagranthi-śchhidryante sarva-
samśayâh,

*Kṣîyante châsya karmâṇi tasmin driṣṭe parâvare.”*¹

When we realize the Absolute, there is left no further questioning in the mind. All doubts will cease for ever; all questions will be answered, and we transcend all the laws of nature; even the law of

1. *Mundaka Upanishad*, II, 8.

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cause and effect, which binds us so strongly and irresistibly on the plane of phenomena, will vanish then. We will transcend all laws and become free and realize that *freedom* which is ever-lasting which has neither beginning nor end. Therefore, Vedânta teaches that these different stages : dualism, qualified non-dualism, and monism, are the different stages in the process of the realization of that Absolute and its relation to us. Therefore, it accepts that all, and a true and sincere seeker after the Absolute, who has realized that Eternal Truth, says that beautiful verse which is described in Sanskrit :

“O Lord, when I think of myself as related to the physical body, I am Thy servant ; Thou art my Lord. When I think of my soul which is an ego, I am Thy part and Thou art the one stupendous Whole. But when I think of my true Self, which is the *Ātman*, which is a part of the Absolute, then I am one with Thee, I am one with the infinite Ocean of existence, intelligence, bliss and love.”¹

1. “*Dāsaste’ham dehadristyâ’smi Sambho
Jâtaste’nso jîvadrityâ tridriste ;
Sarvasyâ’tmannâtmadrityâ tvamev-
tyevam me dhîr nischitâ sarvashâstraih.*”

CHAPTER IX

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: When should we consider a material universe an illusion?

Ans: You cannot call it an illusion until you reach the Absolute. It would be a mistake. It is real. But anyone who has reached the Absolute, to him it would appear like a dream, and not to us. So long as we are conscious of these things they are absolutely real to us. They are not illusions.

Q: Most ministers and preachers of the Gospel tell us to put our mind on the spirit. To gain knowledge of the universe, why should we not put our mind on the material universe?

Ans: Certainly. We should put our mind on the material universe and harmonize God and the world.

There are different stages in the process of Realization; in the first stage we consider the material world, we must think of our gross physical body; but if we are seekers after the Absolute, we do not find any limitations. You are mixing up the Absolute with matter but the Absolute is neither mind nor matter; but when you rise on the plane of the Absolute, as I gave the illustration of the magnet, when you come to the neutral point of the magnet, there is neither positive nor negative; but when you come to the one pole

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the other pole, of course, exists. When you are on the positive pole you cannot deny the negative pole. How can you deny the consciousness of the body unless you go to the neutral point, which is beyond thought, time and space? We must not mix the ideal of the Absolute with any of our mental conditions which are within the limitations of time and space, and which we can think about. That would be the distinction, so, there is no confusion about it. We must describe different view-points to understand the relation of the Absolute to the universe and to ourselves.

Q: If the Absolute existed in the beginning of all, and if the ultimate goal of all life is to involve in the Absolute, we cannot understand the necessity of evolution unless it is necessary for the Absolute to constantly manifest itself by means of material phenomena.

Ans: Yes, the Absolute constantly exists and manifests in some form or other. It is a part of its nature. There is no question of necessity or forcing its nature. If this manifestation stops, (as in the case of *Khanda Pralaya* or partial dissolution of any planetary system) there would be manifestation in some other planet.

Q: Then we would never attain to the Absolute!

Ans: Oh yes, you will attain to the Absolute, when you go to the neutral point. You may attain to the Absolute, but the rest of the world will go on just the same without you.

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Q: Do we understand you to say that the law of action and reaction is a fixed law?

Ans: It is fixed in this way, that it is the law that governs all the phenomena. If you strike a blow on the table you receive a blow in return. It is fixed in that sense. But it is not fixed beyond limitations; beyond time and beyond space it cannot work.

Q: Then a person who once made some mistake had to suffer all the rest of his life. Is it natural?

Ans: Every action will produce its reaction. Nothing is done without producing a result, and that is a good thing to happen.

Q: Then he would have to suffer all his life! Can this Absolute not cure it or wipe it out?

Ans: It will be cured in the end. The Absolute does not suffer. The person himself would have to suffer all his life, or as Christ taught your own spirit will wipe it out when the Divine realization comes. Everything will be wiped out.

Q: Do you believe in the truth of Astrology?

Ans: Astrology? Partly. As far as there is truth in it.

Q: How much truth is there in it?

Ans: Fortune-telling rarely gives us truth. The scientific side I accept, but modern Astrology goes too far in fortune-telling business. Our country has been the home of Astrology from ancient times. We accept Astrology but not in all its phases. There is some truth in it which cannot be denied; but the people stretch it too far.

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Q: When should we feel at liberty to go into this ultimate state, into the Absolute? It would seem that when we do that, we have risen above the mental plane, and hence would disconnect ourselves by that from our work in this world.

Ans: Now, when there is so much work to be done in the world before humanity is lifted out of this ignorance of which you speak, and as it is said by Christ, that work would continue until this world would become the Kingdom of Heaven and finally all would be laid at the feet of God.

Q: Now until that work is accomplished, are we at liberty to leave our jobs here and go into the Absolute?

Ans: When you are ready for the Absolute, the work will not need you. The world will give you permission to get out.

Q: Do we ever reach that point?

Ans: No, we impose upon ourselves all these works and duties through our ignorance.

Q: Who are we to take the responsibility? We cannot move our finger without the will of the Lord, so the Lord knows how to manage His business.

Ans: It is our business. If you seek the Kingdom of Heaven first, everything else will be added unto you. First of all, we must search the Absolute, and try to realize that, before we can do anything else. If we do everything else outside of that we are always

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You can never eradicate any evil by reform works. That is a mistake. Train and educate the children. The parents must be responsible for bringing them up and educating them. Give them the ideal in the beginning, how and what should be their ideal ! Do not try to reform them from outside.

Q: Cannot all these reform societies do any real good?

Ans. Yes, it depends upon our educational system. Take the boys and girls in the school and colleges, in their home life. They must learn the Truth, how this world exists. Parents ought not to have children unless they know how to rear them. So, it is a great responsibility. Outside reformers who are reforming on the surface do not go to the root of things. If the cause of evil is removed, the effect will be removed naturally. That is the real reform work that we need today. Christ came to do that work, but what are those modern reformers doing? They are not helping humanity in that sense as Christ did. We must first of all try to realize our spiritual nature and our relation to the Absolute, and then out of the fullness of the heart the mouth will speak and the hands will work.

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